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SMOKE WALKER

THE TIMES

No. 65,277

FRIDAY MAY 26 1995

Bombers hit ammunition depots

Nato ready to strike at Serbs again

By JOEL BRAND IN SARAJEVO, MICHAEL EVANS AND EVE-ANN PRENTICE

NATO warplanes are poised to carry out more raids against the Bosnian Serbs today, after destroying two ammunition stores with a strike deep in their heartland yesterday.

An ultimatum for Serb and government troops to surrender their heavy weapons or remove them from the exclusion zone around Sarajevo will expire at noon local time (11am BST). "We are stressing that there is the possibility of more action like today's," a UN spokesman said.



Smith was said to be determined to strike even if the guns were handed in late, but in the event they were not, and Nato jets which had spent the morning patrolling the area returned to blast the arms depots. Nato sources later described the raid as successful.

In yesterday's raid, bombers backed by a multinational force of support aircraft hit two bunkers inside an ammunition depot near the Serb headquarters in Pale, after they refused to return artillery seized from a UN weapons collection area.

around Sarajevo. A UN spokeswoman in Zagreb said: "Reprisals are always a consideration. Our aim was to stop a dangerous and deteriorating situation."

Last November, Bosnian Serb forces took several hundred peacekeepers and military observers hostage after a series of Nato strikes. The troops were finally released, but the experience left its mark on senior UN officials, who had not authorised another airstrike until yesterday.

The raid failed to halt all firing in Sarajevo, however, and a general alert sounded last night after Serb troops fired a cannon at a UN weapons collection point in a Sarajevo suburb, reportedly killing a woman and injuring a child. Bosnian Government sources appeared to be holding their fire while leaders of the UN force considered asking for further punishing air raids. One senior official said: "We are prepared to escalate."

The UN halted all convoys across Bosnian Serb territory in the hours leading up to the mission, and UN staff were advised to take precautions against Serb retaliation after Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, threatened: "If Smith (the UN commander, Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith) orders air strikes against us, we will treat the United Nations as enemies."

Reprisals against UN troops would strengthen growing calls for a pullout from Britain and France, which provide the bulk of the UN force. The mechanics of a withdrawal would be fraught with danger, however. Evacuating British troops in the Serb-surrounded Muslim enclave of Gorazde, for instance, would be extremely difficult.

For the first time, Nato refused to say which countries contributed aircraft to yesterday's raid for fear of reprisals against UN troops. UN officials described the attack as "very, very risky", but said there had been no other choice when negotiations failed to stop the bombardments.

As General Smith's moon deadline loomed, Serb and Bosnian Government generals had largely heeded his demand that heavy weapons fire around Sarajevo should cease, but the Serbs held on to the four big guns. General

Even if they can be safely evacuated, Muslim civilians being left behind are not likely to stand quietly aside while the troops leave, and media coverage of such a pullout would be highly embarrassing for the international community.

UN reminder, page 13



Ecstatic fans, their faces painted in the colours of the new South African flag, celebrate a try by the Springboks in Cape Town yesterday

Joy as South Africans trounce Australia

FROM MICHAEL HAMLIN IN CAPE TOWN

SOUTH AFRICANS were jubilant last night as the Springboks trounced Australia, the reigning world champions, by 27 points to 18 in the opening match of the Rugby World Cup in Cape Town yesterday.

Not even the arrival of democracy a year ago could match the supreme feelings of pleasure in the faces of all races in the streets around the Newlands rugby ground behind Table Mountain as the reality of the hosts' dream-like opening to the competition sank in.

President Mandela, a recent convert to Springbok rugby, formally opened the tournament and welcomed the 16 participating teams.

On behalf of the rainbow nation, I welcome you all," he said to a roar of welcome from the 50,000-strong sell-out crowd. "From the first kick-off we are certain to witness rugby of an exceptional standard. Through it, we shall also contribute to the promotion of excellence, world peace and friendship."

The restored Victoria and Albert entertainment area on the wharf rocked with celebration as what seemed to be the entire population of the Mother City enjoyed a jol.

President Mandela, a recent convert to Springbok rugby, formally opened the tournament and welcomed the 16 participating teams.

Blacks and Coloureds saw it as their victory as well even though the side fielded only white players because of the injury of the winger, Chester Williams. The victory engulfed the nation in a nationalistic fervour more powerful than that which rallied the country at the inauguration of President Mandela.

A Coloured man stood outside the ground last night and yelled: "We are going to kick their ass, again," expressing a thought in every spectator's mind, for Australia and South Africa may well meet again in the final.

After years of international isolation because of its apartheid policies the World Cup has become a symbol of the acceptance of South Africa by the community of nations.

Four thousand spectators painted their faces in the colours of the new flag in preparation for the wild dancing that greeted the home side's success. This success is also a symbol of how the new South Africa has lost none of its old sporting prowess nor its legendary hospitality.

As the players ran on to the field, business came to a standstill. Courts, schools and businesses closed four hours early as people scrambled to catch a slice of history.

Scotland prepare, page 43
Springboks win, page 48



Mandela: welcome to the rainbow nation

TOMORROW IN THE TIMES

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Share option curb planned for next privatisations

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RESTRICTIONS on executive share options are being prepared by ministers, it was disclosed last night after the Prime Minister was forced to defend electricity executives who have transferred thousands of shares into their wives' names.

Plans are being finalised to ensure that next year's flotations of Railtrack and Nuclear Electric are not hit by rows over boardroom greed.

Share options in future sell-offs would be issued at market prices rather than flotation prices to curb windfall gains estimated by Labour at around £100 million for the bosses of privatised utilities.

In the Commons, the Prime Minister said that it was a fundamental principle that transfers of property between husband and wife were free of tax and accused Labour of "hating" privatisation.

But Tony Blair demanded that the Government take action to plug what he considered a tax loophole.

It is understood that the committee of business chiefs studying the remuneration of directors will recommend that newly privatised companies should not issue share options to their directors at the price at which the company is initially offered for sale.

Instead, the option price would be higher and fixed by the level at which the market settles after several months.

African Adam is seen as the father of man

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

AN "African Adam" was probably the common ancestor to all modern males, according to fresh evidence from an American team investigating a chromosome.

Their study strengthens the belief that all modern humans are descended from African ancestors who lived between 100,000 and 200,000 years ago.

The American team has examined a section of the Y chromosome, possessed only by men, in 38 volunteers from around the world. To their surprise, they found that all had identical stretches of DNA on the chromosome, though they came from widely different racial and geographic backgrounds.

If the first *homo sapiens* was very remote in time, the process by which DNA suffers random mutation would have left the men with distinct differences. Previous studies of mitochondrial DNA, which passes down the maternal line, suggest that this ancestor was alive somewhere about 100,000 years ago. Now the male data points to the same conclusion. The fact that the DNA on the Y chromosome shows no variation at all, puts a limit of 270,000 years on the African Adam, report Drs Robert Dorit of Yale, Hiroshi Akashi of the University of Chicago, and Walter Gilbert of Harvard, in today's issue of *Science*.

Hurd agrees hard line on Europe

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

A TOUGH "but positive" approach to next year's conference on the future of Europe in which Britain will seek to build alliances with other nations to limit and even claw back the powers of Brussels over some policies was agreed by Cabinet ministers yesterday.

The Cabinet's overseas and defence policy committee agreed that further attempts should be made to limit European Union action to areas where it is necessary and valuable and to increase cooperation between governments.

It also stood firm against any extension of European Union influence into the spheres of foreign affairs, defence and home affairs, and any proposals to increase the powers of the European Parliament or to weaken the right of member states to veto legislation. However, it rejected suggestions favoured by hardline Eurosceptics that big EU policy areas such as the common agricultural policy and common fisheries policy should be "repatriated" to individual countries.

An attempt to water down the powers of the European Court to make retrospective judgments was also agreed and ministers are optimistic about winning allies in the Union for such a move. Britain is also to propose treaty changes to clamp down on European fraud.

Britain's approach is likely to be outlined in a speech by Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, on June 21, shortly before the Cannes European summit. But although senior

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Hostilities over fat cats' pay need a UN ceasefire

Ranked in order of importance, the three news stories prominent yesterday were Bosnia, Ulster peace and share options for National Grid executives' wives. So at Prime Minister's Questions MPs dwelt almost exclusively on the wives, touched briefly on Northern Ireland and, when Paddy Ashdown mentioned Bosnia, groaned and shouted "boring".

John Major and Tony Blair fought each other to a messy draw on executives' wives. If ever there were a dispute which really did cry out for a UN-supervised ceasefire, fat cats' pay is it. Both leaders strained patience. Mr Blair tried to pretend this was a

simple, moral, national issue, soluble by the exercise of virtue alone. His preachiness begins to grate. Mr Major tried to corral the executives' wives together with penniless widows and struggling mums, and accused Labour of threatening the institution of marriage itself. Someone should tell him that share options are not a big issue in Merthyr Tydfil.

What did either leader hope to gain? I suppose (for Blair) the vague impression that the Tories defend greed; and (for Major) the impression that Labour are in a tangle about policy. They may care to know that both impressions were successfully conveyed yesterday afternoon. Next time any

MP so much as mentions anybody else's salary, it is to be hoped that men in blue berets will rush into the Chamber and cart them off. This is one area where an armed force of peacekeepers, prepared if necessary to shoot, really could assist.

Northern Ireland was more complicated. One of the joys of watching Questions to the Northern Ireland Secretary in an era when the Government is walking on eggs is to hear Ulster Unionists roundly abusing ministers and see

ministers smile and thank them very much. The Secretary of State, Sir Patrick Mayhew, was away in Washington meeting Gerry Adams. (Which of us could have guessed, five years ago, that we would write that?) Junior ministers Michael Ancram and Sir John Wheeler deputised.

The UUP Leader, Jim Molyneux, told Mr Ancram that his trust in Sinn Fein was horribly misplaced because the IRA continued to execute civilians. Mr Ancram thanked

Mr Molyneux effusively for reminding us all of the importance attached to the cessation of violence. David Trimble (UUP) abused Sir John Wheeler for countenancing (he suspected) the sale to speculators of a local hospital. Sir John praised Mr Trimble for the "informed and dedicated interest the hon gentleman takes in the concerns of his constituents".

Ken Maginnis (UUP) accused ministers of a "sordid little dalliance" with terrorists. Sir John, panting with goodwill, complimented Mr Maginnis on his wisdom: he was right, yapped Wheeler, to observe that on the road to peace, some groups were fleet of foot than others. This

was not what Mr Maginnis had observed. Unionists seem to be enjoying a private game, testing just how insulting it is possible to be, and still be liked all over by a fawning minister.

Sitting behind Wheeler and Ancram, in the place where Sir Patrick's Parliamentary Private Secretary, Richard Spring, always sat (before he resigned recently over an unusual *News of the World* story involving a treble Sunday School teacher) was Richard Spring.

It seems that the Tories have hit on the best way of dealing with silly season stories in the newspapers: announce your resignation and carry on with your job.



POLITICAL SKETCH

Clinton increases pressure on Adams over IRA weapons

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton signalled his growing impatience with the IRA yesterday by publicly calling on it to "take the next step and begin to discuss the serious decommitment of weapons".

Mr Clinton, who has gone out on a limb to support Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein despite British opposition, used the first important speech by an American president dedicated to Ireland to tell the IRA and other groups they had to decommit their arsenals.

"The spectre of violence that has haunted Ireland must be banished once and for all," he told the White House conference on trade and investment in Ireland.

The President went further. Speaking to an unprecedented gathering in Washington that included Mr Adams and representatives of every Irish political party and faction, he also called for an end to punishment beatings and intimidation. He urged the paramilitary groups to end "exclusion orders" against political enemies and reveal the graves of those they had kidnapped and killed.

It was time to begin "healing the wounds of a generation" and to "allow families to be whole again", he said. To placate Unionists who have interpreted his feting of Mr Adams as proof of his republican bias, Mr Clinton also disclosed that his Irish ancestors were Protestants.



Clinton: tough stance praised by Mayhew

past". The White House also revealed that Mr Clinton wants to visit Britain and Ireland later this year and was discussing dates.

His first official visit to Ireland would let him trumpet what he considers his substantial contribution to the peace process and bolster his support among the 40 million Americans claiming Irish descent.

On Wednesday night Sir Patrick became the first Cabinet minister to hold an official meeting with Mr Adams or any other leader of the IRA's

political wing. The meeting marked another step in Sinn Fein's march towards respectability, but Mr Adams again failed to offer the commitment to decommit IRA weapons.

Sir Patrick later described the 30-minute meeting as merely "civil", but British sources said it had been a little more productive than they were prepared publicly to admit. Sir Patrick had been "impressed" by Mr Adams' personality, and the Sinn Fein leader "did go some way towards assuring him of his personal commitment to the

peace process". Mr Adams hailed the meeting as a "frank, friendly and positive exchange of views".

While Sir Patrick said shaking Mr Adams' hand was something "I don't care for", Mr Adams called Sir Patrick a man he could do business with and declared: "I extended the hand of friendship and he clasped it."

But, the long-term importance of this conference may lie not in that meeting, nor in whatever US investment it produces in Northern Ireland and the border counties, but in the fact that for the first time people closely linked to both the IRA and loyalist paramilitaries, and members of the British, Irish and American governments have gathered beneath one roof.

John Major gave a fresh warning to Sinn Fein yesterday that full-scale political talks would be impossible until "practical moves" had been made towards the decommissioning of arms (James Landale writes).

The move came as MPs attacked the meeting between Sir Patrick and Mr Adams during the Washington conference.

The Prime Minister told the Rev Ian Paisley, Ulster Unionist MP for Antrim North: "The best contribution Sinn Fein can make to the conference and to Northern Ireland's prospects would be to promote peace and therefore to secure the decommissioning of the IRA's arms and explosives. That remains the Government's position."

"And until in these exploratory talks there have been practical movements forward in the decommissioning of arms, it will not be possible for Sinn Fein to move forward to full-scale political talks."



The "eccentric" who approached the Prince in Brighton is restrained by police

By ALAN HAMILTON

Barefoot man lunges at Prince

THE Prince of Wales was startled but unhurt yesterday when a man broke through a security cordon and rushed at him from the crowd during a visit to Brighton.

The man, barefoot and clad only in T-shirt and shorts, got to within 6ft of the Prince when he broke through a crowd barrier in an attempt to hand the Prince a note.

He was about to get into his car after unveiling a plaque at the restored Victoria Fountain in the town's Old Steine area, near the Brighton Pavilion, and talking to a crowd that had gathered to see him. The intruder was immediately wrestled to the ground by

uniformed officers, one of whom was later treated for minor injuries to his mouth.

As the man ran forward, Inspector Bob Fulton, an armed plain-clothes member of the Metropolitan Police royalty and diplomatic protection department who was acting as royal bodyguard, moved to cover the Prince's body. The intruder was unarmed and was led away in handcuffs. Twenty members of an animal rights group,

who had been demonstrating against the Prince's foxhunting, disclaimed all responsibility for the incident.

Sussex Police sources said last night that the man, a 46-year-old local, was well known to them, and was regarded as harmless, if eccentric.

Officials accompanying the royal visit dismissed the incident as minor, and said that the Prince had been unperturbed.

Security surrounding the Prince will be at a much higher level than usual next week when he makes a 24-hour official visit to Dublin, the first official appearance in the Republic of Ireland by a member of British royalty since 1911.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Shepherd tackles failing schools

Ministers have called in academic experts to help to reverse a culture of failure in state schools, as part of an assault on low standards announced yesterday by Gillian Shepherd, the Education Secretary. Primary schools judged close to failure will face new inspections and all schools will be encouraged to set targets for improvement, under plans to be implemented next year. The programme to raise standards will combine the expertise of the government agencies responsible for inspection and teacher training with civil servants and academics at London University's Institute of Education.

Teachers' unions welcomed the initiative but were critical of the absence of new money. Local authorities will be expected to contribute much of the resources and government funds will be diverted from other programmes at a time when the amount earmarked for such projects is expected to drop.

Deadlock over Nolan

Tory and Labour leaders failed to break the deadlock over membership of the new Commons committee formed to clarify the Nolan report. The two parties will have to wait until next month before they agree to the 11 members. But they did agree to terms of reference for the committee, which will aim to advise on how the Nolan recommendations can be "clarified and implemented". Labour claimed it had forced the Government to state clearly that the committee would not reject Lord Nolan's proposals, but the Conservatives said that despite Labour pressure ministers had not altered the remit of the committee.

Pollution ticket backed

Plans to give traffic wardens powers to issue "pollution tickets" for vehicles that fail roadside emission tests have been proposed by the Tory MP Sir Cranley Onslow. His amendment to the Environment Agencies Bill, expected to become law next month, is understood to have government support. Tim Brown of the National Society for Clean Air said that the scheme would make pollution checks on dirty vehicles more effective.

BBC reprimanded

A BBC interview with Ronnie Biggs, the train robber, on Radio 2's late-night magazine programme *The Jamesons* was over-sympathetic, the Broadcasting Standards Council has ruled after a complaint that the interview, which coincided with the publication in January of Biggs' biography, glorified crime. The complainant was particularly offended by the jocular offer of a plate of jellied eels to Biggs on condition that he return to Britain from Brazil.

Maxwells' jury chosen

The jury for the trial of Kevin and Ian Maxwell was selected yesterday. The seven women and five men were chosen from a list of 700 who have been vetted for the trial, which opens at the Old Bailey on Wednesday. It is expected to last six months. Kevin Maxwell, 36, former chief executive of Maxwell Communications Corporation, his 38-year-old brother, Ian, former chief executive of Mirror Group Newspapers, and two former advisers are accused of fraud.

Rikki's mother in court

The mother of six-year-old Rikki Neave was remanded in custody for seven days yesterday charged with murdering her son last November. Ruth Neave, 26, of no fixed address, spoke only to confirm her name, age and address when she made a 10-minute appearance before magistrates in Peterborough. Rikki's naked body was found on scrubland 500 yards from his home in Welland, Peterborough. He had been strangled.

£50,000 for Jagger tape

A previously unknown recording of Mick Jagger and Keith Richards performing in the front room of a house was sold yesterday for £50,625 at Christies in London. The reel-to-reel tape was recorded in 1961, two years before the formation of the Rolling Stones. It contains 12 tracks and lasts 34 minutes. The tape was bought by an anonymous telephone bidder but was sold without copyright, making it illegal to reproduce without permission of the artists.

Roadworks threaten holiday weekend

By JONATHAN PRYNN
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of holidaymakers eager for a trouble-free weekend should consider staying at home as roadworks throughout the country threaten to gridlock main routes and cause widespread delays.

Travellers bound for Wales and the West Country especially were last night warned to prepare for severe hold-ups as work starts tonight on repairs to the M4 in west London, which will be shut between junctions one and two.

The worst hold-ups are likely on Monday evening as drivers head for home at the end of the Whit Sun Bank Holiday. However, problems are expected to start as early as lunchtime today and build to levels of peak congestion during the evening rush.

AA Roadwatch said: "We would tell people to stay at home but no one pays any attention. Instead we advise motorists to allow plenty of time for journeys today and avoid the worst hold-ups by setting out early on Saturday morning instead."

There will be some pretty horrific tail-backs and traffic jams with routes to leisure areas, the coast, the West Country and Wales particularly bad - but for many these routes are virtually impossible to avoid. We can only tell people to avoid setting out late on Friday as it will be the worst time to travel."

Airports are also expecting one of their

busiest weekends of the year with many schools breaking up for half-term holidays. Heathrow said that more than 600,000 passengers were expected to pass through the airport over the weekend, with a peak of 170,000 today. Most are bound for short-haul destinations such as Paris and Rome.

In Britain, typically gloomy Bank Holiday weather is expected for much of the weekend with bands of rain passing over the country tomorrow and on Sunday. Monday is expected to be drier and warmer, particularly in the east, when there will be sunny intervals and only occasional showers.

Forecast, page 24

Hurd

Continued from page 1
Cabinet ministers suggested last night that the Government's approach would satisfy 80 per cent of Tory MPs and ministers, the continuing tensions inside the party over the agenda for the inter-governmental conference was highlighted when a leaked Westminster paper disclosed that a big group of Euro-sceptic Tories have been secretly debating plans to urge Mr Major to provoke a "crisis" at the summit.

The three-page document, drawn up for meetings of the Fresh Start group of 40-50

Euro-sceptic MPs, discusses ways of exploiting the summit to ensure that Britain ends up with an arms-length relationship with the rest of the European Union. In direct contradiction to the policy agreed by the Cabinet committee yesterday it calls for mass repatriation of powers under which, for instance, the United Kingdom would run its own agriculture and fisheries policies.

It also calls for British withdrawal from moves towards a single currency and measures to limit the powers of the European court and the supremacy of European law over domestic law.

Robin Cook, the Shadow

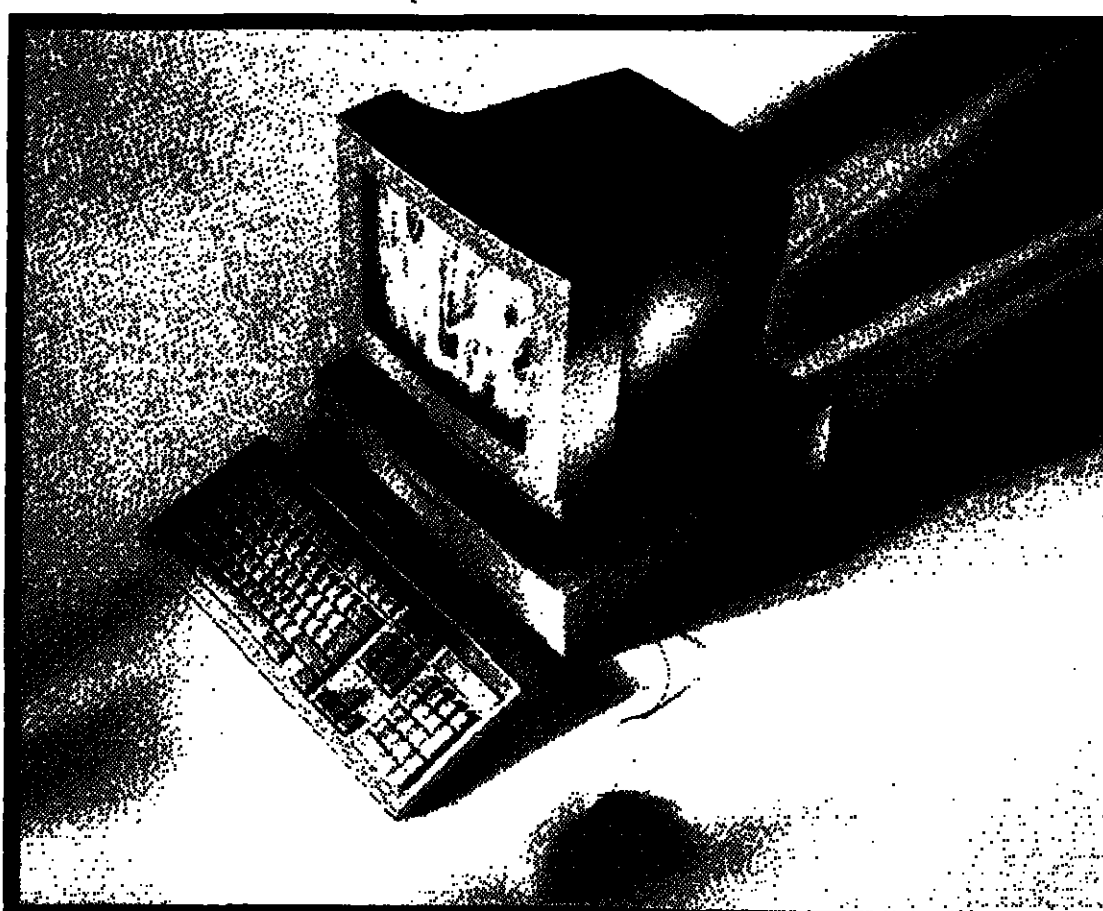
Foreign Secretary, seized on the paper to accuse Euro-sceptic Tories of playing "a dangerous game" for narrow party advantage. "What is most alarming is the cynical call on the Government to create a crisis in Europe. That is a really dangerous game and it is British jobs and exports that are being used as a political football."

However, after yesterday's 90-minute meeting of the Cabinet committee, which discussed a four-month study of the IGC by a special European committee headed by Mr Hurd, senior ministers were confident that after all "the pain and grief" the Government would have a policy that

would "put daylight" between the Government and Tony Blair's European policy without being negative about the future of Europe.

Mr Hurd was anxious to emphasise to yesterday's meeting that, contrary to reports, he had by no means abandoned hopes of taking back powers from Brussels. He said there were specific policy areas where European Union influence might be limited through amendments to the treaty, and he was hopeful of finding support.

Mr Major's meeting in Bonn today with Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, will mark the beginning of that process.



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'Evil vet' guilty of murdering wife with drugs meant for animals

By RICHARD DUCE

AN "EVIL, selfish and criminally callous" vet was jailed for life yesterday after a jury found him guilty of poisoning his wife with drugs intended for animals.

Ryan James, 40, believed he could convince police his wife Sandra had killed herself, allowing him to set up home with his mistress, Catherine Crooks, who was married to a family friend.

For several weeks Mrs James, 38, a mother of three, was given Immobilon, a powerful drug used to anaesthetise horses, in drinks of orange juice. She was also given the barbiturate phenobarbitone in place of an antibiotic she used for a chest infection.

Mr Justice Hadden at Stafford Crown Court recommended that James serve a minimum of 20 years. The judge said: "You are as evil, selfish and criminally callous a man as I have ever had to sentence. You used your knowledge and expertise in your career as a vet, in which your wife had supported and encouraged you, to put together a calculated and wicked plan to end her life and take her from her children so that you could afford to live with a woman

you had chosen to replace her. You abused the trust she had in you by getting her to swallow phenobarbitone. You also used injections to get drugs into her body and phenobarbitone to render her unable to stop you.

"You had to kill her and you had to insult and harm her memory by making up an issue that she had committed suicide. That was a diabolical plot. The only sentence I can pass is one of life imprisonment but I shall recommend to the Home Secretary that you not be released from prison for 20 years." James, of Burton on Trent, Staffordshire, had denied murder but was convicted after the jury deliberated for six hours. He shook his head and muttered as he was found guilty of the murder in January last year. Mrs Crooks had been granted custody of Mrs James's three children and moved into her home with her own three children after leaving her husband. Last night it was believed members of Mrs James's family would try to regain custody.

James, who earned £35,000 a year, began his affair with Mrs Crooks, 33, after meeting her at



Sandra James, left, poisoned by her husband Ryan so he could live with Catherine Crooks, right

parent-teacher association meetings at the Thomas Russell Infant School, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffordshire, in September 1993. Within three weeks the lovers had left their spouses to set up home in a rented bungalow in nearby Alrewas. James, with debts of £143,000, could not afford to run two homes. Both returned to their partners but the affair continued.

Peter Joyce, QC, for the prosecution, said James then began to sow the seeds of his eventual defence by telling friends that he thought his wife could kill herself after learning of the affair.

Mr Joyce said: "For two days before Christmas 1993 friends of Mrs James said she was like a zombie, as if she was drugged. But she did not smell of drink and she appeared to have very little recollection of those two lost days.

Towards the start of the week in which she died, forensic evidence shows a massive dose of phenobarbitone was administered." He said Mrs James was also given Immobilon, a drug so dangerous it can cause unconsciousness within 30 seconds.

"It is the case of the eternal triangle. The vet, his mistress and his wife. Mr James could not afford to live with his mistress. He had

everything to gain by his wife's death and nothing to gain from divorce. She was the one standing in the way of him living with his mistress. There were also substantial debts of £143,000 which were wiped out by her death."

On the night of his wife's death in January last year James had gone off to meet Mrs Crooks. The mixture of orange juice and Immobilon he had earlier forced down her throat while she was in a drug-induced coma had been enough to kill six people.

As his wife lay a few hours from death James then arranged to meet his mistress, Mrs Crooks, telephoned James on his mobile phone and let it ring three times to warn him she was ten minutes away from his bungalow. After disconnecting the upstairs telephone James then walked 200 yards to a water tower and met his lover.

Friends of Mrs James said that she had been shattered by her husband's affair but was being positive about the future. She had started to look for a new home and had cut her husband out of her will. In it she wrote: "To my husband Ryan, I leave absolutely nothing. I loved you and lost you." She met her husband in 1982

while she worked at a stables where James was called out to treat a horse. The couple married in the following year. Jane Harrison, a friend of Mrs James, said she was very drawn and had lost a lot of weight after her husband left her. "Sandra was very shocked by what had happened but seemed to be in control."

Mrs Crooks told the court on the first day of the trial that her affair with Mr James had been no secret. Last night she was not at home and was understood to be considering whether to accept offers from national newspapers for her story. After the case Steven Lomas, Mrs James's brother, said: "Justice has been done."

Detective Inspector Peter Hall, a senior officer on the murder investigation, said James, who was not arrested until two months after his wife's death, had thought he could fool police. "In interviews he was always controlled and composed when responding to questions. He did think he was going to get away with it," he said.

Mr Hall revealed that police had adapted tests used at racetracks to determine whether horses had been doped, to determine that Mrs James had been poisoned.

'He told Amber to get on with her life. He could see she had a future'

Graduate crippled in birthday prank chooses to die

By TIM JONES

A UNIVERSITY graduate paralysed from the neck down after a birthday prank allowed himself to die to spare the suffering of his family and fiancée.

David Norman, 24, could not face spending the rest of his life being dependent on others and decided to end his life by refusing to allow doctors to inject him with insulin for his severe diabetes.

Mr Norman, a keen sportsman who played for Plymouth University First XV rugby team, was paralysed 18 months ago when friends gave him birthday bumps and he fell on his head from four feet at the Oz nightclub in Plymouth.

His father, Bill Norman, 48, said yesterday: "I think David decided he had suffered enough. You can imagine what life must have been like for someone with no feeling from the neck down but a very sharp brain."

"For the last 18 months of his life he had no control over anything he did. To go through the rest of his life on a ventilator was more than he could face."

His son refused to take any more insulin last Thursday and died 48 hours later. Mr Norman said he had probably decided to end his life at Easter when he broke off the engagement with his fiancée, Amber Thomas.

When she visited him at Odstock Hospital, Salisbury,

he told her: "Forget about me and get on with your own life." Last night, she was too distressed to comment.

Mr Norman said: "The whole thing has been quite amazing. He seems to have worked through the logistics of it all and known what his commitments were. He knew that once he had triggered something, no one could do anything to stop it."

Although he was in pain and discomfort for much of the time, relatives said he was more concerned with the mental anguish he was causing his mother, father and fiancée.

Mr Norman said: "We've had wonderful tributes from patients in Odstock Hospital, who said how much they had benefited from chatting with David. He was an inspiration to everyone and such a brave, brave man. I am very proud of his bravery and selflessness."

"It was a great shock but, typically of David, he let us down very gently. He told Amber to get on with her own life. He could see she had a future ahead of her."

Mr Norman, a building society manager from Roxham, near Chippenham, Wiltshire, his wife Elspeth, 45, and their daughter Elizabeth, 25, were at David's bedside when he died. He said his son, who had graduated with an honours degree in business studies, had hoped to make a career in marketing.

He was a "little chap with a

big heart". He added: "At the end of the day I think he had just had enough. He had so much to offer but I think the indignity and the pain was too much for him. It has been a terrible blow but I have nothing but pride and respect."

Elizabeth Norman, an English and drama student at Cardiff University, said: "My brother was a very, very brave boy. I'm extremely proud of all the things he accomplished and how hard he battled with his injury."

"We are absolutely devastated at the loss but I am getting through this because of the strength he gave me. I feel very numb, I just feel as though I'm in limbo. We were brother and sister but we were also great friends. We had our arguments but, as his big sister, I would always look out for him."

"He wasn't mentally affected by the accident, he was always the same boy, but he was paralysed. I think the pain just got too much for him. None of us can imagine the pain he went through. I think the hurt became too much for him."

Last night, a spokeswoman for the British Medical Association said mentally aware patients had the right to refuse treatment after doctors had explained to them the consequences of their actions. She said: "If they refuse treatment in those circumstances they have the right to die."



David Norman with his fiancée, Amber Thomas. He broke off their engagement

Football star appeals over jail sentence

By JOHN GOODBODY, SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE footballer Duncan Ferguson, who played for Everton in their FA Cup final victory last Saturday, was yesterday given a three-month jail sentence by a Glasgow court for head-butting another footballer while representing Rangers in a Scottish League match last year.

Ferguson, who is the first international player in Britain to be jailed for an assault on another professional on the field, was later released from custody, pending an appeal in October.

The sentence completes an unsavoury season for the national game. There have been allegations of match-fixing, drugs scandals, a resurgence of football hooliganism, the attack by Eric Cantona on a Crystal Palace fan and the conviction of Dennis Wise, the Chelsea and England midfielder, of assaulting a taxi-driver.

Ferguson, nicknamed "Duncan Disorderly", who in 1993 set a British record fee of £4 million when transferred to Rangers, has three previous convictions for assault. Sheriff Alexander Eccles referred to the convictions. He told Ferguson, 23, that he was jailing him in the public interest and to bring home to the Everton forward that such behaviour could not be tolerated from someone who was looked up to by young people.

After a two-day trial earlier this month, the 6ft 4in forward had been found guilty of head-butting John McStay, the Raith Rovers defender, in a Scottish Premier Division match at Ibrox Park on April 16 last year. The Scottish Football Association has already imposed a 12-match ban, which is in abeyance pending the appeal.

Two hours after being sentenced, Ferguson's lawyers obtained his "interim liberty" from Sheriff Eccles, who heard the application in private. After he was released from custody, Ferguson left the court with his lawyer Donald Findlay. Both declined to comment.

Peter Johnson, the Everton chairman, who brought Ferguson to Goodison Park last season, said the club fully supported Ferguson.

Sheriff Eccles had earlier described the assault as a "serious offence and totally unacceptable behaviour. On this particular occasion, I would accept it took place

against a background of a highly charged football match which, like many other sports, is a contact sport involving a certain amount of violence. In addition, the other player was not seriously injured."

However, the Sheriff went on to say that it was a "clearly deliberate act", which took part not in the course of play but after a stoppage. The referee did not see the incident but it was reported to the football authorities and the police because it was extensively shown on television.

In giving evidence, McStay had said the incident was a "clash of heads. I could not say if it was an accident or not." The judge subsequently warned the Raith player: "Do you understand the meaning



Ferguson: found guilty

of perjury? It is lying under oath. It is a serious offence." Mr Findlay argued yesterday that it was a heat-of-the-moment incident by a young man, who had since matured and that other incidents in football had not been followed by prosecutions. He said that as a youngster showing considerable talent, Ferguson had attracted the attentions of people "who were not always well disposed to him".

In January 1992, Ferguson was fined £125 for head-butting a policeman. In March 1993, he was fined £200 for assaulting a man on crutches in a taxi queue. Six months later he was almost jailed when a judge in Fife told him to grow up after punching a stranger in a bar.

Since arriving at Everton, he has been sent off against Arsenal and Leicester City and received a drink-driving ban.

Mormons cry foul at ban by Christian soccer league

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A MORMON football team is to appeal to local soccer authorities after being refused entry to a church league on grounds of doctrine.

While the Mormons, from Gillingham in Kent, say they are Christian, organisers of the Medway and District Inter-Church Football League claim that they are not Christian enough — if at all.

One league member said: "They hold a completely different view of salvation and who Jesus Christ is, which makes them incompatible with the aim of the league, which is to bring people to salvation through

Jesus." The eight-strong league, founded in 1991, includes Anglican, Baptist and independent churches, but as yet no Roman Catholic church has applied to join. Games are usually preceded by prayers and members afterwards will often make time to give thanks for a good game and the opportunity to witness to their faith.

Richard Hayton, a former police officer who chairs the league and who is pastor of Parkwood Christian Fellowship, said: "We have been accused of showing an unchristian attitude, which I find sad." He said

the league was about more than football. "It is an opportunity to share the gospel of good news of Jesus Christ and what he's done for us."

He conceded that the application by the Mormons could have been interpreted as a good opportunity for them to be converted but said not one of eight people entitled to vote supported the Mormons at the league's annual meeting.

The Mormon team manager, David Tulip, 26, a computer engineer, is to take the case to the Kent County Football Association, accusing the league of "churchist" discrimination. He said: "We were willing to take the chance that they

might convert us. I can't see why they would not object."

"The league's statement of purpose claims it exists to allow church football teams to play friendly matches against other church sides at competitive level. It also claims to uphold Christian standards while playing and supporting, to set an example to spectators and to encourage involvement in the church."

"These are rules we wholeheartedly agree with. We too are a Christian organisation and we want to be involved with the community. This is discrimination as much as sexism or racism. It's churchist." The Mormon XI, with players aged 16 to 45, has

played informally for five years in local leagues, in its blue strip with white sleeves and black shorts, but wanted the heightened competition of the church league. Mr Tulip said: "We are not a perfect team but no one has ever been sent off for fouls and we do not swear."

Shirley Bleakley, a Mormon spokeswoman, said: "We are Christians and we do believe in Jesus Christ and so I can't understand why this league cannot accept us because all we are trying to do is become part of the community."

She added: "This is a ridiculous situation to be in. After all, this is just a game of football."



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RSPCA

NHS executive among 12 dead after pilot told air traffic control his engine had been hit by lightning

Boy overheard last words from doomed aircraft

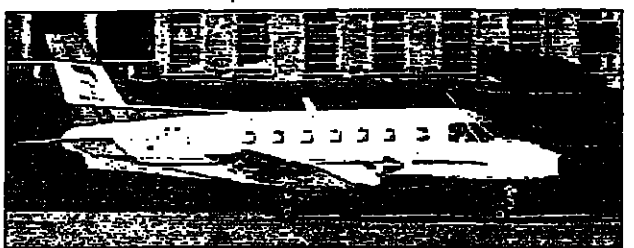
By HARVEY ELLIOTT
RONNIE FAUX AND
PAUL WILKINSON

A SCHOOLBOY scanning the airwaves on his radio receiver heard the last moments of the commuter aircraft that crashed in a Yorkshire field, killing 12 people.

Stephen Saunders, 11, heard the pilot telling the control tower at Leeds-Bradford airport that his engine had been hit by lightning. "He said he had 12 people on board and that the plane was starting to stall. His voice sounded quite calm."



Philip Race, left; Stephen Saunders and his radio; and a Knight Air plane at Leeds-Bradford yesterday



Stephen, of Kendall, Cumbria, said he was convinced he heard a transmission from the doomed plane. "The reception was a bit crackly and I could not hear what the controller was saying to him, but I heard him give an eight and a six, which were part of the correct flight number."

The boy, who was given the set as a birthday present by his grandfather, said his experience had not deterred him from his ambition of becoming an airline pilot.

The Bandeirante aircraft did not carry flight data or cockpit voice recorders, and its wreckage was spread over a wide area. Stephen's evidence, with recordings made by air traffic controllers at Leeds-Bradford, is likely to be vital to experts from the Department of Transport's air accident investigation branch.

The short-haul plane, operated by the commuter airline

Race, 48, who was originally from the London area, moved to Scotland in December 1992 with his wife Elizabeth and three children, two teenage boys and a 10-year-old girl.

Mr Race had recently been involved in pay negotiations with health service unions. He was a member of a number of working groups, including the Scottish Health Services Personnel Directors Group. He had been in Leeds for a meeting of senior NHS personnel.

Ivy Wolsey, a pensioner in her late seventies, was flying from her home in Bradford to Aberdeen to see her grandchildren. Her son, Pete Wolsey, a freelance television cameraman, was waiting at Aberdeen airport to meet her.

Mrs Wolsey had not seen the children for several months and was said to have been looking forward to the visit. The family live in the village of St Cyrus, Grampian.

The other names on the flight passenger list were last night given as:

Dennis Davis, 48, of Pontefract, West Yorkshire; Kathleen Duguid of Aberdeen; Philip Hutchinson of Aberdeen; William Ingram, 61, of Aberdeen; Carl McGrath, 27, of Glasgow; Christopher Tomkin, 32, of Keighley, West Yorkshire; and Raymond Nettleton, 50, of Bradford.

The flight crew were John Casson, 49, of Halifax; Paul Denton, of Huddersfield; and Helen Leadbetter, 22, of Halifax.

Knight Air and on a scheduled service from Leeds to Aberdeen, weighed fractionally under the 5,700kg limit above which all passenger aircraft have to carry the recorders.

Knight Air is one of 151 "Type B" airlines in Britain licensed to fly aircraft with between two and 19 seats. Tim Russell, the company's commercial director, said it was too early to speculate on the cause of the crash, but significantly no prohibition had been issued on flights by its three other Bandeirante aircraft. He

said the crew were "vastly experienced" and the aircraft was regarded as a reliable type suited to flying in all weathers.

The crashed aircraft carried the registration number G-OEAA and had been delivered new to Jersey European Airways in 1980. It had remained on the British register and was used by a number of small operators before being taken over by Knight Air in 1993.

Among the dead was Philip Race, director of human resources at Aberdeen Royal Hospitals NHS Trust. Mr



The field in which the commuter plane crashed on Wednesday, killing nine passengers and three crew

Tourist saw pallets in road near site of coach crash

By LIN JENKINS

AN AUSTRALIAN tourist who drove along the M4 shortly after a coach crashed on Tuesday with the loss of ten lives has told police there were wooden pallets littering the carriageway.

Police investigating the cause of the accident have appealed for information about a flatbed lorry that is believed to have shed its load of wood or pallets on the motorway.

Don Avar, 59, a property developer from Adelaide, saw a number of pallets in the carriageway and vehicles hitting them or swerving to

avoid the debris. Stephen Brown, 39, the driver of the coach from Laguna Coaches, Bournemouth, said in a statement to police that he swerved to avoid "an object" in his path.

Accident investigators, who were continuing to examine the scene and the mangled wreckage of the coach yesterday, said that on initial inspection there was no obvious defect in the vehicle. They confirmed that remains of wooden pallets had been found near the crash.

PC Ian Chadwick, of Avon and Somerset Police, said that the flatbed lorry, which could have been blue, may have passed the scene shortly

before the accident or stopped close to the scene itself.

Mr Avar said: "I was at the spot where the coach went off the motorway about 30 seconds after the accident happened. There were a number of wooden pallets strewn across the carriageway. They were being broken up by the passing traffic while other drivers were having to swerve to avoid the debris. I can only assume that perhaps the pallets fell off a vehicle travelling in front of the coach and the driver had to swerve to avoid them."

Police yesterday named the remaining four of the ten people who

died when the coach crashed near Bristol as it coach returned from a Royal British Legion outing. They were Bill Brooks, 68, a retired factory worker and his wife Phyllis, 65, an office cleaner, of Christchurch, Dorset; Kathleen Coombes, 76, of Chichester, West Sussex; and David Law, 73, of Christchurch.

Of the 19 injured, 11 remained in hospital yesterday. Three were in a serious condition in intensive care.

Representatives from the Royal British Legion visited the site of the crash yesterday for a wreath-laying ceremony. Major John Cox, welfare officer of the Christchurch branch,

laid a wreath of poppies on top of the concrete culvert that brought the coach to a halt as it slid on its roof into a gully. The wreath was from members of the Christchurch Legion and read simply: "In Memory of Our Comrades."

He was joined at the scene by Gillian Lees, wife of Commander John Lees. Mrs Lees laid a number of floral tributes alongside the wreath and stood beside the major for a moment's contemplation. Her husband, who served on the Royal Yacht Britannia, watched silently.

Letters, page 21

Boy, 14, died trying to save horse on M4

A SCHOOLBOY died trying to rescue a horse that had escaped from a horsebox and was running across a motorway, an inquest was told yesterday.

Richard Bryan, 14, of Letton, Hereford and Worcester, was clinging to the horse's neck when a car struck and killed them. The boy's uncle, Lionel Bowen, who was driving the horsebox, said: "Richard was a dedicated horseman and he put his own life in

danger trying to save the horse."

Mr Bowen, a horse dealer, was returning from a Bristol show to a farm in Haverfordwest, Dyfed, when the accident happened on the M4 near Swansea. He told the Swansea hearing that he had stopped on the hard shoulder because the four horses in the vehicle were restless. Richard Morgan, the Swansea and Gower Coroner, recorded a verdict of accidental death.

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Brain drain goes into reverse

Oxford tempts back its lost academics

BY BEN PRESTON
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE "brain drain" operated in reverse yesterday as Oxford University announced the appointment of two senior academics previously lost to the United States.

Professor Colin Lucas, a historian, was named as the Vice-Chancellor to usher the ancient university into the 21st century. He was lured back to Oxford from the University of Chicago only last September as Master of Balliol College. New College also disclosed that Alan Ryan, currently professor of politics at Princeton University, will become Warden in September 1996.

Professor Lucas, a scholar of the French Revolution, will take the helm at a critical time when he succeeds Dr Peter North in 1997. Oxford is on the brink of far-reaching decisions with a commission of inquiry re-examining fundamental re-



Lucas vice-chancellor

lationships between colleges and the university, and dons and students.

The commission is charged with keeping Oxford among the world's leading universities at a time when competition is international and increasingly fierce. Professor Lucas will be expected to push through any programme of reform recommended by the

commission, which is even reviewing such sacred cows as the college system and individual undergraduate tutorials.

Professor Lucas said yesterday: "My task is to continue to make Oxford great into the new century, maintaining its supremacy in an environment that has changed and will continue to change." He said he regarded the next two years as Vice-Chancellor elect as an apprenticeship: "I will look into every corner of the university."

Professor Lucas was a fellow and senior tutor at Balliol from 1973 to 1990. He left to become Professor of History and then Dean of the Division of Social Sciences at Chicago.

Professor Lucas follows two previous Masters of Balliol to the post: Benjamin Jowett (1882) and Alexander Lindsay (1935). Professor Ryan was a lecturer at Oxford from 1969 to 1978, then reader in politics until 1987.



During eight years in office, Judge Tumim fought to end "slopping out" in jails

Tumim to retire as jail inspector

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

JUDGE Tumim is to step down as Chief Inspector of Prisons after eight years, during which he has visited almost every jail in England and Wales.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, has decided not to extend the judge's term in office when it ends in November. Judge Tumim, 64, said last night: "Both the Home Secretary and I think eight years is about right. It has been a very successful period."

The judge, the first member of the judiciary to be chief inspector, will be remembered for his drive to end "slopping out" and the increased media profile he has given prisons. During his years in office he has drawn attention to the inefficiency, squalor and barbaric conditions in jails and the extent of bullying and drug abuse. Recently his reports have also highlighted improvements.

Paul Cavadin, chairman of the Penal Affairs Consortium, said Judge Tumim had played a vital role in forcing

the pace of change. "He has had a remarkable impact both inside prisons and by alerting the public to what they were like. It was entirely because of his championing of the cause of internal sanitation that slopping out has ended so quickly."

Judge Tumim, a circuit judge, became Chief Inspector of Prisons in November 1987 for an initial five years, which was renewed for three more by Kenneth Clarke. He quickly made his mark by issuing a report in 1988 describing conditions at Risley remand centre near Warrington, Cheshire, as "barbarous and squalid".

He had a flair for public relations, which he employed to call for far-reaching reform in many television and radio appearances. There is no doubt that some of his criticisms have exasperated the Home Office.

He said earlier this year: "I don't set out to be a nuisance. My job is to tell the truth as I see it and the truth can be a little embarrassing."

Test points to potential brittle bone sufferers

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

DOCTORS have developed a blood test for identifying people at genetic risk of osteoporosis, the brittle bone disease that affects four million women in this country and is estimated to cause 50,000 hip fractures a year.

A team at St Thomas's Hospital, London, has devised the test, which identifies a genetic defect present in 20 per cent of the population that predisposes individuals to the disease. Doctors believe that, by identifying those at risk, treatment can be started early to keep the disease under control.

The test follows two years of research on nearly 200 pairs of twins. The twins, who were past the menopause, were studied for the presence of the vitamin D receptor gene that can occur in three different forms. Those with the "at risk" variant — 20 per cent of the total — had a lower bone density than their siblings, which could mean a 50 per cent increase in susceptibility to fractures. Dr Tim Spector said: "What this proves is that bone density is strongly influenced by genetics."

The St Thomas's work is funded by the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council and published in the *British Medical Journal*.

Vaccine to fight Aids becomes step closer

BY OUR HEALTH
CORRESPONDENT

SCIENTISTS have moved closer to developing a vaccine against Aids. Doctors at the National Institute of Biological Standards and Control in Hertfordshire are claiming a significant advance after developing a vaccine that has protected monkeys against infection with simian immunodeficiency virus, the monkey form of HIV.

Their success proves that an effective Aids vaccine is feasible, counter to claims by some scientists that the complexity of the virus makes it impossible to protect against, they say in *The Lancet*. To be effective, the vaccine has to work against HIV-infected cells as well as free virus particles.

Dr Neil Almond and colleagues at the institute vaccinated eight monkeys with a live virus that had been treated to make it weaker and no longer infectious. They investigated monkeys because the disease SIV is similar to HIV infection in humans.

The monkeys were challenged with the full-strength virus nine months later. None of the eight developed the disease but eight unvaccinated all became infected. Dr John Beale says the research is the one bright prospect amid the widespread gloom over work on an Aids vaccine.

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MEDICAL BRIEFING

Why the Prince took his blood to Kenya

WHEN the Prince of Wales visited Kenya he offended the local medical establishment by taking his own cross-matched blood with him.

His action was described as an example of Western arrogance, but recent research by Dr Guillermo Herrera of the Federal Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States has vindicated his medical advisers.

Dr Patrick Osewe, a Kenyan research worker now based in Atlanta, has reported Dr Herrera's research in the journal *East African*. Testing in a sophisticated pathological laboratory in the States showed that the tests on the blood used in five Kenyan government hospitals were dangerously misleading.

When the blood was retested in the States it was found that a quarter of the samples which had been classified as being safe were in fact HIV positive. This lethal blood had been transfused into patients. Few travellers can carry

stocks of refrigerated blood. Dr Peter Barrett, of the travel health consultants MASTA, suggests that the holidaymaker's best bet is to take a sterile needle and syringe pack, obtainable from a British Airways travel clinic, and to join the Blood Care Foundation, a charity for which British Airways travel clinics are agents. The foundation provides checked blood abroad.

Blood donated in Britain and most big capitals is tested for HIV. But the test only picks up antibodies to the Aids virus, indicating its presence three months after infection. The risk of acquiring HIV if infected blood slips through this "window" is estimated at one in a million but the danger rises sharply in areas where many people carry the virus. Highest risk areas are sub-Saharan Africa, Thailand, New York and Los Angeles.

DR THOMAS STUTTFORD

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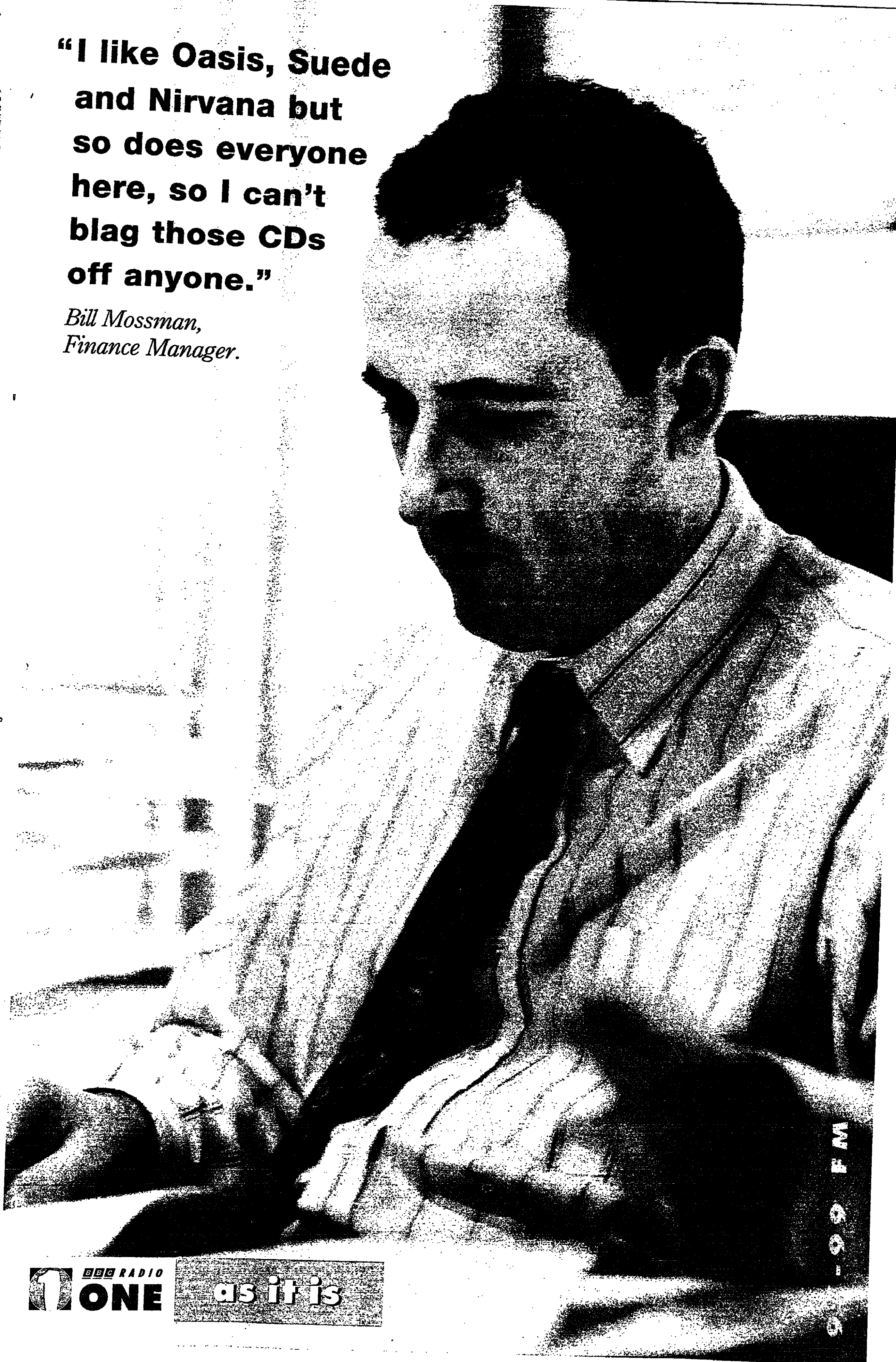
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Lord Chief Justice backs reform of murder sentencing

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR legal figures, including the Lord Chief Justice, are pressing for a change in the law to end the secrecy over how long murderers should spend behind bars.

In a move likely to be strongly resisted by the Government, Lord Taylor of Gossforth is joined by Lord Ackner, the law lord, and Lord Alexander of Weeden, QC, in pressing for a reform that would bring into the open judges' recommendations on the length of life sentences.

Lord Taylor is supporting a new clause to the Criminal Appeals Bill, which will be debated on June 8 in the Lords, tabled by Lords Ackner and Alexander yesterday.

At present, judges make secret recommendations on the minimum period a murderer should serve to the Home Secretary. He makes the final decision, sometimes increasing it, as in the case of the two boys convicted of murdering James Bulger.

Lord Taylor said: "I see no justification for maintaining secrecy in the advice the Home Secretary receives from the judiciary in murder cases."

"When the death penalty was abolished, it was accepted that the procedure for setting the so-called tariff period [the

minimum period judges believe the murderer should serve to satisfy requirements of retribution and deterrence] should be confidential. But times have moved on. The public, quite rightly in my view, now expects decisions to be taken, and justified, in public wherever possible."

The clause would enable judges to state in open court how long they think a murderer should serve after hearing argument from counsel on both sides. Prisoners would have the right of appeal against the sentence, and the Home Secretary would still retain the right to change the recommendation.

The present system is shrouded in secrecy. Judges have to fill out a confidential form, stating their recommendation for the minimum sentence. The trial judge passes the recommendation to the Lord Chief Justice who makes his own and passes them to the Home Secretary.

Since a recent Court of Appeal ruling, prisoners are told of the recommended minimum term. They have no right of appeal, however, because it is not defined under present law as a sentence.

Judges are also critical of the present system because it

conflicts with the imposition of a discretionary life sentence, such as for rape or manslaughter. This is done in open court and prisoners can appeal.

Lord Taylor said: "I find the distinction hard to justify, and I doubt it makes much sense to the general public."

Lord Ackner said it was hard to see how the Government could resist the new clause as it did not affect the Home Secretary's power to set the length of time a murderer should remain in prison.

"What it does do is to bring the procedure in mandatory murder cases closer to that where a judge imposes life in a discretionary case, many of which are far more serious cases of homicide involving a greater degree of violence and threat to the community."

Discretionary life sentences could involve a serious case of arson or an attempted terrorist attack, whereas a mandatory life sentence might be imposed for a mercy killing or killing of a violent husband by a battered wife. However, the first would be dealt with openly, and granted a right of appeal, while the mandatory cases would not. "The present anomalies are quite indefensible," Lord Ackner said.



Coronation Street's brassy barmaid Bet Gilroy is to leave the soap after 25 years

Landlady Bet quits the Street on a high note

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE actress Julie Goodyear, who as *Coronation Street's* Bet Gilroy has been loved by two generations of viewers, is to leave the country's most popular television show after 25 years.

Miss Goodyear, who plays the brassy landlady of the Rovers Return pub in the ITV soap opera, said she was leaving to pursue other interests and spend more time with her family. The announcement coincided with news that *Coronation Street's* cast, production team and writers had been awarded the gold medal in the Royal Television Society's annual awards.

The society's judges praised the programme last night for "creating a national institution and legendary characters who can take their place for ever at the heart of our popular culture". The show attracts 18 million viewers three times a week.

Miss Goodyear, who first appeared as a worker in a local raincoat factory in 1966, became a regular character in 1970. She said yesterday that it would be a "tremendous wrench" to go, but added that she hoped an option would be left open for her to return to the show one day. "This isn't goodbye. It is

au revoir. I could never leave the Street for good."

"I have spent 25 very happy years with *Coronation Street*. It has been a privilege to play such a strong character as Bet and the decision to leave has been one of the most difficult I've ever had to make," she said. She is known to be considering a role in a film by Kay Mellor, who wrote the recent ITV drama *Band of Gold*.

Miss Goodyear is widely regarded as a fine character actress and has become an essential part of *Coronation Street's* cast, developing Bet Gilroy (née Lynch) into a strong-willed woman with a heart of gold. Usually decked out in ostentatious earrings and heavily made-up, she has a sharp sense of humour and unbeatable line in witty one-liners.

She could always be relied on in a crisis. When a coach crashed into the pub she responded typically: "I hardly ever cry. You can't afford to when you've got this much mascara on."

Miss Goodyear once attributed her character's popularity to her "bounce-back-ability". She added yesterday that she hoped viewers' enduring memory of Bet would be: "At least she tried."

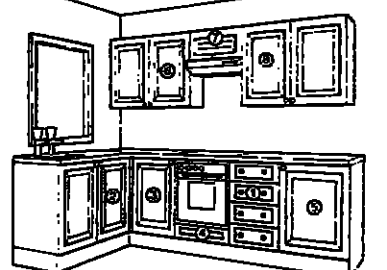
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Deal defeated in fight to keep Royal Marines

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Marines school of music at Deal, the scene of an IRA bomb that killed 11 bandmen, is to be closed despite an emotional campaign to prevent the school being moved to Portsmouth.

The confirmation yesterday by Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister, caused an outcry from people in the Kent town, which has had a Royal Marine presence for 200 years.

David Shaw, the Tory MP for Dover, claimed the Ministry of Defence's figures justifying the closure of the barracks were "bunkum" and appealed

to John Major to intervene. The former mayor of Deal, Marianne McNicholas, who took office shortly before the IRA bombing in 1989, joined the chorus of protests against the decision.

She said: "Eleven young men were blown apart by the IRA but this doesn't seem to count. We have had 200 years of links with the Marines. It's part of our heritage and now the Ministry of Defence is going to take it away."

In February, the Royal Marines celebrated the 50th anniversary of becoming Freemen of the town. The intention to transfer the music school to Portsmouth was announced in July last year as part of the Frontline First defence costs study, which had to find savings of £750 million. A period of consultation was declared before a final decision.

The MoD highlighted Deal as an example of waste by claiming that it cost £6 million a year to run, and £300,000 to train each bandman. The ministry said that moving the music school to Portsmouth would save £3 million a year.

Yesterday, after receiving a letter from Mr Soames apologising for the decision to go ahead with the closure, Mr Shaw denounced the MoD figures. "They divided the overheads by the number of students at the school but left out the numerous trained musicians based at Deal who go around the country giving concerts," he said. Mr Shaw said a study by the accountants Ernst & Young showed that savings would be only £2 million over four years, and he dismissed the MoD's claim that only four of the 127 music school staff at Deal would be needed at Portsmouth.

Mr Shaw rejected Mr Soames's claim that the three sites at Deal could be sold for a profit. He said: "An independent valuer (Cluttons) valued the sites at minus £5 million. There are 69 buildings on the sites and three are listed so it would cost £5 million more to maintain them than a developer could make by building houses."

In his letter, Mr Soames told the MP: "There have been a number of difficult decisions arising from Frontline First and this ranks amongst the most difficult."

Leading article, page 21



Sir Peter: "Our duty to help disaffected youth"

Army sets a challenge for bored youngsters

By MICHAEL EVANS

GENERAL Sir Peter de la Billière, the Gulf War commander, launched an initiative yesterday to draw "crime-vulnerable youngsters" off the streets. Sir Peter, president of the Army Cadet Force Association, said the youth organisation wanted to help "disaffected and bored" young people who hung around on the streets.

The youth and community initiative will help underprivileged young people to share the benefits experienced by more than 40,000 cadets in 1,650 detachments throughout the country. The Army Cadet Force plans to offer young people in 20 cities the chance to get away from city life and take part in a number of challenging activities.

Sir Peter said: "Essentially they are the same marvellous youngsters I had around me in my platoon 40 years ago and let us not forget that many are the grandchildren of those who saved this country in World War Two."

Speaking at St James's Palace in the presence of the Duke of Edinburgh, colonel-in-chief of the association, Sir Peter said: "It is not only our duty to do what we can to help them with a bit of care and leadership but it is in all our interests to do so." He said the Government supported the project.

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Poll offers Major little comfort as spring revival is reversed and Labour strength endures

Tories see support slipping back in former heartland

BY PETER RIDDELL

TORY support has dropped to near its lowest ever levels in its traditional strongholds in the South and among the middle classes, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The modest Tory revival seen during the spring has been reversed. The party's rating has dropped from 26 to 22 per cent since the end of April, while Labour has advanced from 56 to 58 per cent, with the Liberal Democrats up one point at 16 per cent.

The normal figures have been re-calculated to take account of the tendency of some Tory supporters not to reveal their voting intentions. After adjusting the "don't knows" for their past declared votes, Tory support is shown five points higher at 27 per cent, with Labour four points down at 54 per cent and the Liberal Democrats one point lower on 15 per cent. This is a much bigger adjustment than before and suggests that some previous Tory supporters have become "don't knows", while Labour waverers may have firmed up their intentions.

The biggest worry for the

Tories is their continued weakness in southern England, where the party suffered sweeping losses in the local elections three weeks ago. Tory support has dropped from 34 to 26 per cent over the past month.

Labour's rating in the region has been about 48 per cent in recent months, compared with an average for the Tories of about 30 per cent. Liberal Democrat support has picked up recently, but is lower than it was a couple of



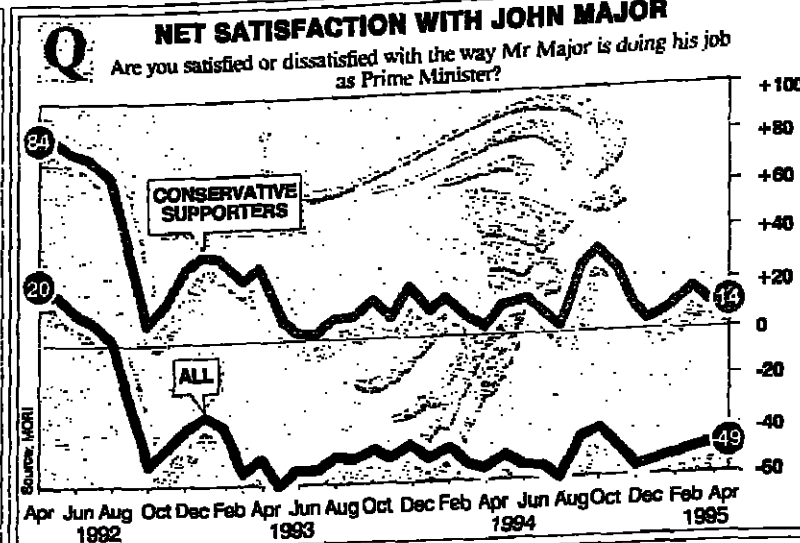
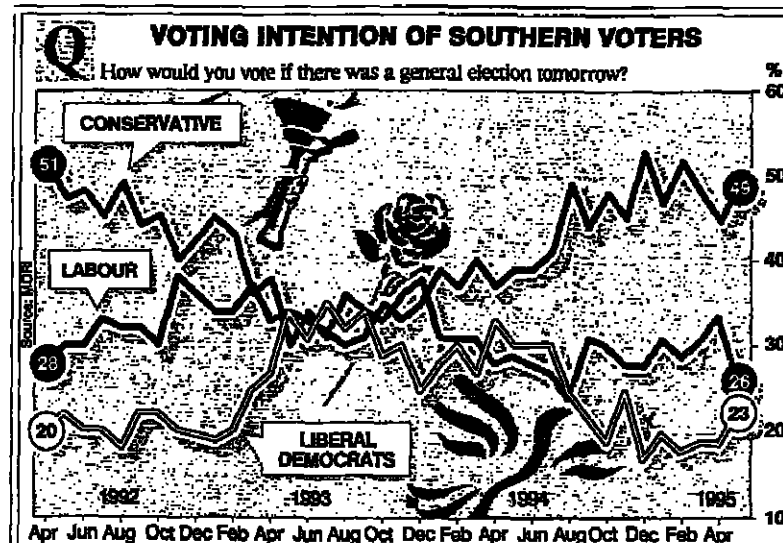
Major: his rating shows no sign of recovery

years ago because of the rise of Labour.

Tory support in the middle classes is now 31 per cent, down four points since late April, while Labour has advanced from 45 to 49 per cent. This is only just below the largest ever Labour lead in the middle classes of 19 points last December.

The poll shows that the public remains uncertain about the strength of the economic recovery. The economic optimism index, measuring the balance of those expecting the general economic condition of the country to improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months, now stands at minus 18 points, compared with minus 16 points at the end of April. This is similar to recent months.

The public is more worried about the health service. The number of people mentioning this as among the most important issues facing Britain today has risen three points to 44 per cent over the past month, the highest level since February 1992. Unemployment remains top of the list.



Voters in the South make above average mentions of the NHS, education, the economy, taxation and Europe among the most important issues.

There is little comfort for John Major in the latest poll. His personal rating dropped sharply in autumn 1992 after the forced departure of sterling from the European exchange-rate mechanism and, despite the occasional upward blip, continues to bounce along the bottom with no signs of a pick-up. His net rating, satisfied less dissatisfied, is still heavily negative among the public generally, and is not very high even among the reduced band of Tory supporters.

His rating is lowest among men rather than women, among those aged 25 to 34, unskilled workers and full-time workers.

By contrast, Tony Blair's rating, which slipped last month, has picked up follow-

ing his victory over Clause Four a month ago. The public is satisfied with his performance by a two-to-one margin with Labour supporters nearly six to one in favour. Mr Blair's rating is highest among men, 25 to 34-year-olds, those living in Scotland and council tenants.

Paddy Ashdown enjoys an even more favourable rating among his own party's supporters, and his party's standing has been picking up.

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,869 adults at 146 word sampling points across Britain. Interviews were conducted face-to-face on May 19 to 22. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (10 per cent), are undecided (8 per cent) or refuse to name a party (3 per cent).

Voters remain opposed to English assemblies

THE public favours a devolved assembly in Scotland but remains strongly opposed to regional government in England, according to a MORI poll (Peter Riddell writes).

The poll is part of the State of Nation survey commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust and based on interviews with 2,141 adults undertaken between April 21 and May 8.

In Scotland, half the public favour a devolved assembly with some tax and spending powers, the position of both Labour and the Liberal Democrats, while

just a fifth support the call of the Scottish Nationalists for Scotland to be independent. Less than a tenth want independence outside the EU and just 17 per cent believe in no change from the present system.

There is broadly similar support for a devolved Scottish assembly from people living in the rest of Britain, though a smaller number back full-scale independence. Four fifths of Scots favour a referendum in Scotland to decide whether a devolved assembly should be set up.

Despite an increase in

support since 1991 in Britain as a whole for a devolved assembly in Scotland, there has been no increase in the popular appeal of regional government for the rest of Britain. Three fifths remain opposed, including more than half of Labour supporters.

The poll shows that the Scots have a far more established sense of national identity than the English. Three in ten voters north of the border say they are Scottish, not British. By contrast, just one in eight of the English said they were English, not British.



Thatcher 'lived in a Churchillian dream world'

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

BARONESS THATCHER lived in a dream world based on a romantic Churchillian vision of a past Britain that never actually existed, according to one of her closest advisers. The former Prime Minister's unwavering faith in the values of Sir Winston Churchill prompted her to recite his name aloud in times of crisis.

Patrick Cosgrave says that her deep, almost fanatical attachment to Churchill's beliefs and her "imaginative" view of Britain's past were central to her determination to remain in power.

Lady Thatcher's former adviser recalls in a television interview her first severe split with Cabinet colleagues in 1981 over her economic plans. "I remember her at the time again and again repeating, like a Mantra, 'Churchill in 1940, Churchill in 1940, Churchill in 1940', referring to her predecessor's Cabinet battle over his refusal to negotiate with Hitler."

"She used to play Churchill's soundtracks quite regularly. She used to refer to him as Winston, as an old friend, a mate, but that is the way she thought of it. She had this very powerful and very romantic view of what her country had been and how she was going to remake it."

Mr Cosgrave's recollection of Lady Thatcher's reliance on Churchill is highlighted in the third episode of *The Living*

Dead, a BBC2 series that begins on Tuesday. In it he also suggests that she was prone to rewriting history and even inventing current popular opinion. Last weekend, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, said Lady Thatcher, who is preparing for the launch of her second book of biography, *The Path to Power*, had engaged in "slightly" rewriting what happened a few years ago over the Government's economic and European policy.

Mr Cosgrave adds: "She knew she didn't have the full trust of Cabinet and she invented a consensus of the nation, junior ministers and backbenchers, all of whom shared her vision of what England had been and could be. All this was inspired by her childhood reading of Churchill. She was in a dream world."

"We are living in her version of Churchill's version of British history. Of course it is a dream but all dreams are in some sense reality. Her vision of the past was very imaginative. Any politician who tries to use history almost invariably doesn't get it quite right but what drives them is what bits they select."

He said it was essentially a case of recapturing an imagined past. "The dream continued virtually to the end. In my opinion, it was when she lost contact with the dream that she lost contact with reality."

IN PARLIAMENT

YESTERDAY in the Commons: questions to Northern Ireland ministers and the Prime Minister. Debates on the Coal Industry (Restructuring Grants) Order and the Pneumoconiosis (Workers' Compensation) (Payment of Claims) (Amendment) Regulations. In the Lords: Peers debated the

Commonwealth Development Corporation Bill, Civil Evidence Bill and Family Homes and Domestic Violence Bill.

Both Houses rose yesterday for the Whitsun recess. The House of Lords will return on Monday June 5 and the Commons on June 6.

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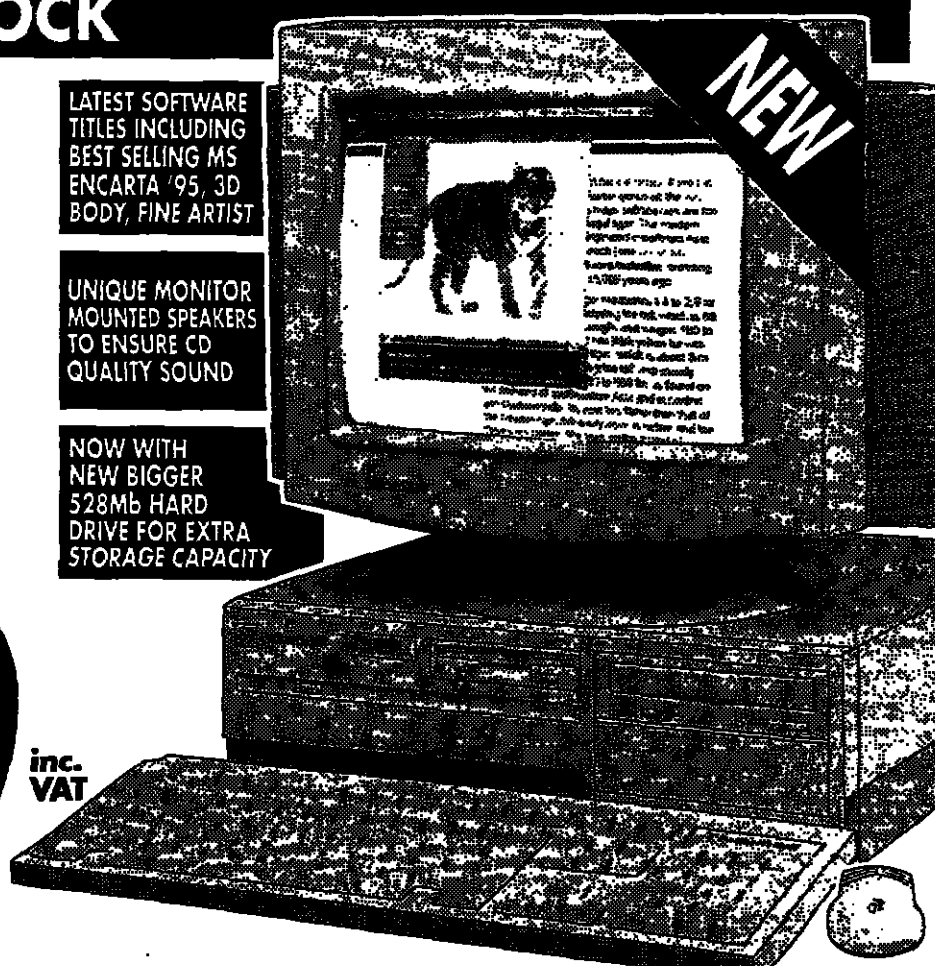
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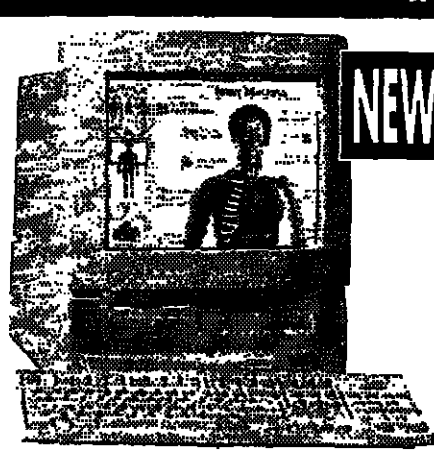


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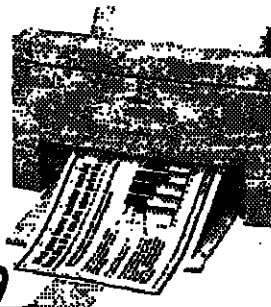
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'The party is forcing this on us and we won't have it'

Labour workers rebel at women shortlist policy

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR'S drive to increase the number of women MPs ran into fierce opposition yesterday as party activists threatened to defy leadership efforts to force them to select a woman candidate for the next general election.

Local Labour workers in Slough, Berkshire, one of the country's tightest marginal seats, has been angered by the national executive's insistence that they present a women-only shortlist. Yesterday, backed by overwhelming support, they called for further meetings with party officials to try to avoid having the list imposed.

Mike Thorpe, the Slough party chairman, said: "We have always had a positive attitude to women here and we simply don't need this. The party is antagonising the people who already support women in politics. Nearly 80 per cent of our women oppose this and are calling on the party officials to think

again." Other officials argue for the retention of Eddie Lopez, the Labour candidate at the 1992 election, who helped to cut the Tory majority from more than 4,000 to 514.

However, Judith Church, Labour MP for Dagenham and a former member of the Slough party, said yesterday: "Unfortunately some people will get hurt. That happens. But it is more important to show that we are a truly democratic party which is prepared to take the initiative on this important issue."

Labour wanted up to 50 constituencies throughout Britain to volunteer to implement the all-women shortlist policy, agreed at last year's party conference. These were to be constituencies either already in Labour hands or winnable Tory seats, with the aim of doubling the number of women Labour MPs to 80.

Seventeen constituencies have voluntarily selected candidates from all-women shortlists and a further 15 will

do so over the next couple of months. But local opposition has led to delays in selecting candidates in many seats and this week's decision to impose the all-women list on one rebel constituency is seen by the leadership as crucial in ending the deadlock.

The imposition of an all-women list in Slough clears the way for all constituencies in Labour's South-west region to select candidates. The party has also achieved the desired number of all-women shortlists in the Central, West Midlands and North Yorkshire regions. However, it faces its biggest test in Wales, where it has yet to find two volunteer constituencies, and the North West, where five constituencies are still needed.

The Labour leadership made clear that the Slough decision would open the party's second phase in persuading, or ultimately forcing constituencies to adopt women candidates. "We intend to use

persuasion but people must be clear that we are not going to back away on this one," one leadership aide said.

However, local resentment remained strong yesterday in the North West, where Labour wants all-women lists in at least four Tory marginal seats, selected from two seats each in Bolton, Blackpool, Bury, and Chorley.

Neil Hilton, chairman of the ruling Labour group on Chorley Borough Council, said: "This is exactly what we would have expected the Tory party to be doing. But it is just not necessary in the Labour Party, which has changed dramatically in its attitude to women in recent years."

"It is a sickness for those people who have been waiting patiently for a vacancy in their own town and working hard to find that they are told they can't stand for election. If it is a question of democracy and fairness, we have got the answer wrong."

A hostile meeting in Manchester last month failed to draw party officials any closer to constituency activists. Judith Jackson, vice-chairman of the Blackpool North constituency party, maintained her resolve to resist all-women lists.

"I am all for more women MPs but the party has tried to force this on us without any real consultation. They have talked down to us and we won't have it. We certainly won't do this voluntarily and, if they impose a list on us, it will have a profound effect on morale."

Retiring Labour MPs have made clear their anger over the proposals, arguing that in some cases able men prospective candidates had been waiting for years to take on the candidacy. One said yesterday: "We are in danger of shooting ourselves in both feet over this one. Let's concentrate first on getting the best candidates. If women are the best, all the better, but let's not give our opponents an open goal."



Judith Church, MP for Dagenham and a former member of the Slough party. She is in favour of women-only lists

Electoral assets with new ideas

BY ALICE THOMSON
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE 18 women already selected under the system of women-only shortlists symbolise the new face of Labour. Their presence proves that Labour is no longer the party of beer and sandwiches.

At least two thirds of them are likely to get seats at the next general election which would help double the number of women Labour MPs to over 80. The party hierarchy hopes they will be a civilising influence, give the first real representation for over 50 per cent of the population and be an electoral asset with their new ideas.

The new women have already been accused by some Labour supporters of being middleclass, red suited Barbie dolls who would never have stood a chance against a virile, white working class male and will have to be sent



Diana Organ, Phyllis Starkey and Karen Buck — three of 18 women already selected under the new system

on endless media courses to learn how to give a speech.

The Tories deride the policy of jobs for the girls as a politically correct insult to women who should be able to stand on their own. However, the women candidates are a formidable group. Most emphasise that they went to state schools but also went to university. All have careers, often with the Labour party or trade unions, and many bal-

ance them with bringing up a family as well as fitting in a host of grassroots commitments. All believe that women-only shortlists are vital and are firm advocates of the new-look Labour Party.

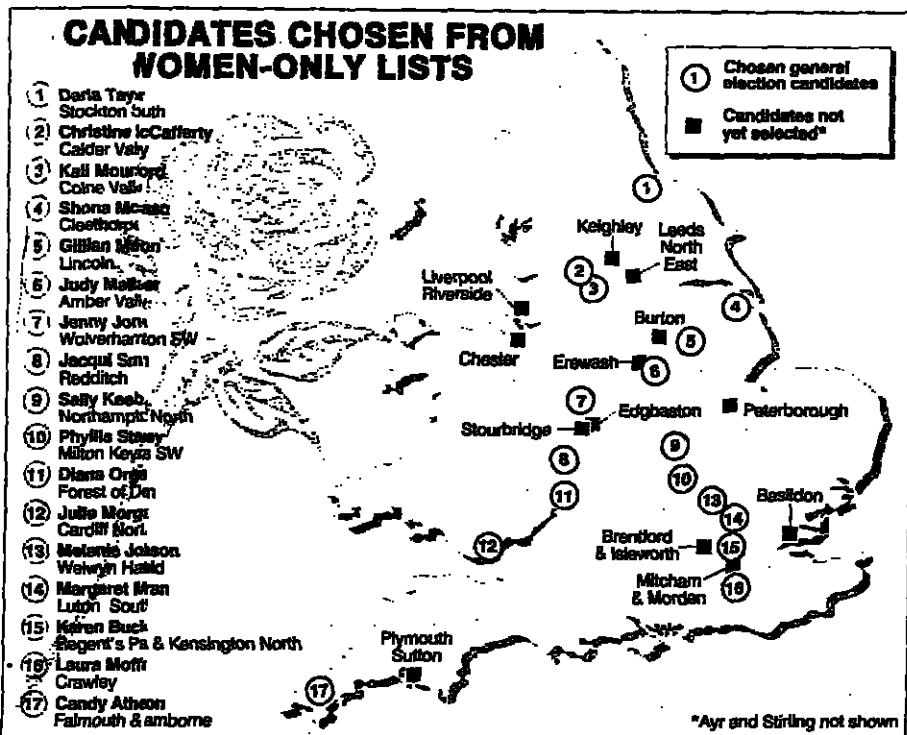
However, most say they would have serious reservations about standing in a constituency such as Slough where party members have made it clear that they will have a woman-only shortlist only under duress. Diana Organ, 43, was likely to have been chosen in the new Forest of Dean constituency regardless of the women-only policy because she was very effective when she stood for the old constituency at the last election. "Labour used to be so biased towards their favoured sons it was risible," she said. "Seats were kept warm for working class, middle-aged men. When it comes to an election no-one will remember the in-fighting. They will just see a modern-looking party."

Phyllis Starkey, 48, was leader of Oxford City Council for four years and is fighting Milton Keynes. "The old system was a disaster for women," she said. "We need this quick boost and then we can probably return to a more equitable system. The only unhappy men I have come across are the ones who wanted to get elected and we never complained when they got onto shortlists time after time."

Karen Buck, 36, a Westminster City Councillor, holds the Labour Party post of deputy head of campaigns and elections where she has co-ordinated pressure against VAT on fuel, rail and Post Office privatisation.

Ms Buck, who is standing for the new seat of Regent's Park and Kensington North, said: "The House of Commons is out of touch on so many issues because it is run by an oligarchy of middle class men. When we get more women in, the Tories will suddenly look terribly old-fashioned."

PETER RIDDELL



Impressive bunch heralds rise of the professional politician

Women-only shortlists will make less difference to the character of the parliamentary Labour party than either supporters or critics of the rule claim. The first 17 women picked in try-held marginal seats, with more to come in the near future, are almost exactly the same backgrounds as the men chosen for similar seats, or who won constituencies from the Tories in 1992. Many are already near-full-time politicians, almost all are or have been councillors, and several have been on the staff



of the Labour Party or of trade unions.

The advocates of women-only shortlists argue that the change will not only increase the proportion of women in the Commons but will also broaden the background and experience of new MPs. The former looks like being achieved if there is any swing from the Tories to Labour at the next election. But the latter will not occur, except in the impor-

tant sense that 11 of the new women candidates have brought up or are bringing up children. This is in contrast with the pre-1980s pattern whereby most women MPs did not have children. Several of the big influx of women MPs in 1992 had young children, and this has already had a noticeable impact, making the Commons less unrepresentative of the public generally.

But, otherwise, the most striking impact of women-only shortlists will be a further rise in the number of professional politicians among new MPs. Full-time politicians, rather

than those with separate non-political careers, have increasingly come to dominate selections in safe and winnable seats. Aspiring candidates for such constituencies have to go through an apprenticeship, serving as local councillors and often fighting hopeless seats. This means that they have to be committed and, in some cases, full-time politicians.

Some 14 of the 17 new candidates have been councillors, in two cases as council leaders. A number have also worked full-time for the Labour Party, including Karen Buck in Regent's Park and Kensington

North, who is deputy head of campaigns and elections; while Sally Keeble, in Northampton North, has dealt with press and communications both for the GMB union and Labour. Four were Oxford educated. Indeed, there has been a revival in the number of Oxford and Cambridge graduates among new Labour MPs.

Those women candidates with experience outside politics have mainly been involved in education and public services and virtually none in industry.

They are by and large an impres-

sive bunch. Although their backgrounds are similar to many new male MPs, several look of higher quality than the average. Some, such as Phyllis Starkey and Margaret Moran, look potential ministers.

Women-only shortlists will not launch an invasion of politically correct left-wing feminists but rather will bring in a further tranche of experienced, professional politicians, many fully paid-up Blairites.

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Vehicles worth £600m lost

Police fight international car thieves

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A POLICE intelligence unit has been formed to fight the highly organised gangs that are stealing luxury cars to order for buyers in Japan and the Middle East.

Commercial vehicles are also selected by the gangs who "gut" an £85,000 lorry within hours of stealing it and ship the parts abroad.

The unit has been formed by the National Criminal Intelligence Service because of growing concern among chief constables at the vast numbers of vehicles that vanish each year. Last year a third of the stolen 600,000 cars, lorries and motorcycles were never recovered.

Albert Pacey, head of the intelligence service, said that the missing vehicles were worth an estimated £600 million and the number uncovered had grown from 77,878 in 1983 to 246,657 in 1993. "This is a problem which extends not only throughout Britain

but also across Europe and probably the United States."

Police investigated one gang stealing Mercedes cars for buyers in the Middle East and found that about 400 cars worth £15 million had been taken and shipped to customers via Malaysia. Other vehicles stolen in Britain have been recovered in Australia and New Zealand. Many go to former colonial countries whose cars are right-hand drive.

Valuable stolen lorries and plant have been sold in parts of the Mediterranean such as Cyprus and northern and eastern Europe. Police have discovered gangs in Britain who will steal a lorry and break it down for spare parts, which can be worth up to £20,000. The remains of the vehicle are then crushed, leaving no trace.

Police also have evidence that Britain has become a transit point for continental



Albert Pacey, head of the National Criminal Intelligence Unit, with some of the cars and bikes recovered

car thieves because of shipping connections to possible markets. Police believe that "jockeys" — couriers — are taking cars stolen on the Continent into Britain by ferry. The cars are then put into containers and freighted to buyers in West Africa.

The new police unit will analyse intelligence to try to pinpoint gangs and co-ordinate investigations between forces. Police information on what is being taken could help

manufacturers to improve their security.

Mr Pacey said the unit would be manned by six officers and link with another unit being set up by Europol in The Hague to monitor the international trade. Interpol is building up a database which should be running by the end of the year, covering 45 countries in Europe.

Detective Sergeant Wayne Smith, who will head the unit, said one problem was the ease

with which vehicles could be exported. Many countries will check incoming vehicles for import duty or safety but there is rarely a check to see if the cars are stolen.

Vehicles stolen in Britain may be driven abroad or packed into containers, many of which may never be checked among the thousands leaving Britain each day.

Detective Chief Inspector Brian Drew, one of the intelligence specialists at the criminal

intelligence service, said cars were not only being stolen off the streets but also from hire and lease companies. He said thieves needed little more than a false identity and papers and they were given the keys to a car without having to break in. Some of the buyers abroad clearly ordered cars and knew they were buying stolen vehicles. Others bought in good faith, never realising they were at the end of a chain.

Thefts driven by ready market for spare parts

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

NORWICH Union paid more than £13 million last year to Porsche owners who had their cars stolen. However, those cars were not protected by industry-approved security systems. Norwich Union did not have one claim from Porsche owners who had fitted sophisticated alarms and immobilisers.

The company insures more than 67,000 cars in categories as high risk, including Mercedes, Porsches, Rolls-Royces, Ferraris and Lamborghinis. Of 15,000 fitted with high-technology approved devices, theft claims were in single figures.

A study for Vauxhall by Northumbria Police found that of more than 12,000 of its new Omega luxury models, which bristle with security equipment, registered up to the end of last year, only one was stolen and that was because someone took the keys from a workshop.

Not all high-risk cars are fitted with security equipment, particularly models several years old. Some owners often risk not installing alarms and immobilisers because of the cost even though their cars could be worth up to £100,000.

Even transport firms, which spend £85,000 on a lorry that pulls a cargo worth tens of thousands of pounds, refuse to invest a few hundred pounds in security. The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association refused to give its annual anti-theft award to lorry manufacturers this year because it could not find a vehicle which had an adequate security system. Yet lorries can be stolen and stripped within hours. Strip-

ping into dozens of bits is also the most likely outcome for high-value stolen cars.

There is a ready market for second-hand spares and models such as Porsches, Ferraris and Mercedes have mainly the same components in the same models wherever they are sold. Now the targets are four-wheel-drive models, and diesel cars are among the most popular.

Car thieves have often graduated from joyriding or moved down from armed

TOP 10

Cars insured by Norwich Union stolen most often:

- 1 Audi 100 TDI 2.5
- 2 Renault Espace 2.1 RTX/E
- 3 BMW 525i SE Touring
- 4 BMW 525 TDSSE
- 5 Audi 80 2.6E
- 6 VW Golf Drive
- 7 BMW 325i Coupe
- 8 Saab 900 Turbo 16 Cabriolet
- 9 VW Golf 1.9 C Turbo-diesel
- 10 BMW 520i ST Touring

robbery or other crimes because the profits are still good while the risks and penalties are lower (Stewart Tandler writes).

Michael Hinchcliffe, a former member of Scotland Yard's stolen car squad and now chief executive of a car security firm, writes in *Police Review* that organised gangs start to recruit the thief who then steals to order at perhaps £300 a time. Eventually, the thief realises he can make money himself by altering and selling theirs.

Cheap and cheerful offers to eat outdoors

BY SARAH SCOTT

WEEKEND SHOPPING

THE Whitsun Bank Holiday has brought many reductions in barbecue foods. Iceland is selling eight beefburgers for £1.59, saving 40p, and 900g of boneless chicken breasts for £3.99. Asda is offering turkey steaks at £1.84 a lb, reduced from £2.09. Waitrose is selling Thai fish kebabs for 99p each, reduced from £1.39.

Best buys include: Asda's Mars ice-cream bars, 8 for £1.89 (were 4 for £1.89); Müller light yoghurt, 29p; Budgens' 2-litre Campsie spring sparkling mineral water, 45p; Co-op's Findus 330g lasagne, 99p; Bird's Eye chicken pies, 4 for £1.49.

Harrods rainbow trout, £4 a kg; cumberland, £3.55 a kg; Iceland's Iceland flocet mix,

99p for 2lb; B's Eye crunch cod crumb, £2.1 for 6; Iceland Alabama chocolate fudge cake, £1.19.

Safeway: unspiced rindless back bacon, 85p a lb; Filgrims Choice: fully matured English farmhouse cheddar, £2.19 a lb; Cyprian new potatoes, 35p a lb.

Somerfield: Somerfield 400g cheesy crust hal and pineapple pizza, £1.79; Somerfield 5-pack caramel delectables, 59p; Tesco: half leg lamb, £2.89 a lb; Tesco applestrudel, 99p each; Granny Smith apples, 39p a lb.

Waitrose: Scottish beef sirloin steaks, £4.99 a lb; asparagus, £2.09 for 250g; Waitrose crème fraîche, 65p for 200ml.

THE TIMES An evening with Baroness Thatcher



To mark the publication of her second volume of memoirs, *The Path to Power*, *The Times*, in co-operation with Dilks, invites readers to an evening with Lady Thatcher. Following the success of her first *Times/Dilks* forum, when she spoke about *The Downing Street Years*, Lady Thatcher will not turn her attention to the years leading up to her premiership, but will discuss her childhood in Grantham, the profound influence of her father, her marriage to Denis, her early career as a politician and her determined rise to power. She will also give characteristically forthright opinions on some of the century's leading political figures. The forum will be chaired by Peter Stothard, Editor of *The Times*, and will offer those attending the opportunity to question Lady Thatcher.

The forum will be held at Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London SW1 on Tuesday, June 13 at 7.00pm. Tickets are £10 each (concessions, £7.50) and are available by ringing 0171-915 6613, by faxing the coupon below to 0171-580 7680, or by sending it, with your remittance, to Dilks the Bookstore, 82 Gower Street, London WC1, where tickets can also be purchased.

THE TIMES/DILKS FORUM

Please send me... tickets at £10 each (£7.50 concessions). *The Times/Dilks* Thatcher Forum, to be held at Westminster Central Hall, London SW1 on Tuesday June 13.

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FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

Although Newt Gingrich is said to be considering his own campaign for the office, the

but is seen as a dynamic speaker and committed supporter of the supply side. Since succeeding his father as chief

of the American public who wish to increase prospects for growth within the United States.



By BEN MACINTYRE

Anthony Brooklier, Fleiss's lawyer, said that while prostitution has been illegal in California for more than a century, no man had ever been prosecuted.

**FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN NEW YORK**

Early last week Harding, whose career was scuppered by her involvement in the plot to stop her rival, Nancy Kerrigan, filed a report after a car ran into the front of her house. A man claiming to be the friend of a professional golfer has been arrested.

FROM REUTER IN TOKYO

The paratrooper's arrest, the latest in an embarrassing series of cases in which members of Japan's armed forces have broken the law to aid the cult, forced Mr Tamazawa to fight off opposition calls for his resignation. "I have the

Another officer resigned this week after he was demoted for helping the sect to obtain a Japanese military manual on how to protect troops against poison gas.



FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

☐ Delta study: Ecologists

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Major sees Kohl as key ally over Europe strategy

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, AND ROGER BOYES IN BONN

JOHN MAJOR flies to Bonn today for annual talks with Helmut Kohl that will focus on British attempts to find support for the Government's European policies in the run-up to the Messina meeting of preparatory experts and next year's inter-governmental conference.

The Prime Minister is seeking support from Bonn for changes in the European Union that do not give greater power to Brussels. In particular, he is hoping to find German readiness to see discussion of home affairs issues such as terrorism, asylum and police co-operation remain at an informal inter-governmental level, while EU member states also keep the Commission at bay in the development of a common foreign and security policy.

In return, Mr Major is likely to back the Chancellor in his eagerness to develop Europe from the low-key drugs enforcement body to a European police organisation with the teeth to tackle terrorism and other cross-border issues. Herr Kohl has been angered by French stalling on Europe, especially the question of hot pursuit across borders, and will be grateful for British support at the Cannes EU summit next month.

On other issues, too, the Prime Minister is looking for agreement on areas where German and British interests contrast with those of France. One will be the unwillingness of Herr Kohl and Mr Major to support French and Spanish proposals for more EU spending on the Mediterranean region, especially if this is at the expense of Eastern Europe.

Another is the promotion of competitiveness in the EU, with publication of a paper the two countries have been drawing up over the past year. Both are eager to see a swath of EU regulation cut back, and want a more open climate for the play of market forces — unlike France.

Britain has always insisted that it has no wish to disrupt

the Franco-German relationship. But it often looks for areas where it can win the affections of one party or the other, especially when relations between the two are strained. Mr Major and Herr Kohl will discuss the election victory of President Chirac and examine how his promise to create more jobs in France can be implemented within the EU framework.

Britain also wants to bring up the level and intensity of its youth exchanges with Germany to that of France. This means boosting the numbers and trying to warm up what is generally seen as a correct, but by no means enthusiastic, relationship between the two countries.

Bonn and London have almost no bilateral issues dividing them. Today's summit will look at defence co-operation, the joint military exercises Britain, Germany and Hungary will undertake as part of the Partnership for Peace programme, and a British offer to train German soldiers for the peacekeeping duties they may be asked to

relations with President Yeltsin, while making clear the consequences of Russian action on their own individual policies.

In another development yesterday German finance officials denied press reports that Bonn was on the verge of winning a battle to impose the name "franken" on the new European currency.

The discussion is still underway in most capitals. The point is to find a name which generates trust in Germany and the whole of Europe, said a senior official concerned with monetary affairs. Frank is only one of a number of proposals in circulation. Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, is keen on Eurofrank or Eurofranken. The naked word "franken" is too suggestive of Mary Shelley's Dr Frankenstein and his monster. But there are dozens of other serious ideas. Ordinary Germans meanwhile have flooded newspapers with their suggestions including the kohl and the bankrott (bankrot is German word bankrupt).

Speaking in London last month, Jürgen Stark, the Finance Ministry State Secretary, made clear that Germany did not feel bound by the Maastricht treaty to use the term euro for the new single currency. "To the Germans it means nothing at all. And I suspect that the same is true for all other Europeans whose mother tongue is neither English nor French. We must think seriously about a handy description that can be used in all languages. In case of doubt, it could include the two syllables Euro, but we are open to all suggestions."

The main deliberations in Germany are not so much about the name as about the design of the note. Three options are under consideration: Euro banknotes could be identical in all countries; or one side of the note could bear a uniform design, while the other side would carry specifically national symbols; or national banknotes could be adapted to take in European imagery.



Kohl: against spending in Mediterranean area

perform for the United Nations.

Both countries will underline their concern over the deteriorating situation in Bosnia. They will co-ordinate their approach to Moscow over the war in Chechnya, a difficult issue for both leaders who want to retain good



Catherine Deneuve, the French actress, flanked by actor John Malkovich, left, and director Manoel de Oliveira, awaits a showing of their film, *The Convent*, at the Cannes Film Festival yesterday. The avant-garde work drew some boozing

Budapest summit seeks to breach Europe's new wall

FROM ADAM LESOR IN BUDAPEST

THE presidents of five Eastern and Central European countries meet at the Hungarian resort town of Keszthely today and tomorrow in a summit that regional diplomats hope will speed the tarty pace of integration into the European Union and Nato.

The leaders of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, the five most advanced countries in Central and Eastern Europe, will attend the confer-

ence on regional co-operation. Representatives from Austria, Germany and Italy will attend, a move seen as emphasising their commitment to the region.

But many in the former Soviet bloc countries complain that the Iron Curtain has been replaced by a paper one, just as efficient in politically dividing Europe, but administered by bureaucrats in Brussels instead of Communists in Moscow. "It's symbolically

very nice that the Germans, Austrians and Italians are coming, but almost six years on from the collapse of Communism there should be something more than another talking-shop," one Western analyst said.

However, many Western diplomats point to continuing disputes between the former Communist allies and the differing pace of reform in the region as slowing its integration with Western Europe.

Chechen ceasefire talks end in failure

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

THE first serious attempt to mediate a ceasefire in the six-month conflict between Russian troops and Chechen fighters ended in failure yesterday, after four hours of inconclusive talks in Grozny.

While the details were not revealed, it seemed clear that neither side was ready to back down from their original demands. The Chechens want a withdrawal of Russian forces before they are prepared to negotiate. The Russians insist that the separatists, led by General Dzhokhar Dudayev, must lay down arms before Moscow halts operations.

Usman Imaev, the head of the Chechen delegation, held out the prospect of more meetings but he said that no agreements had been reached, accusing the Russians of stepping up attacks on villages.

"The main thing is talks have started and that is already positive," said Mr Imaev. "However, from what we saw today, the Russian side is not yet ready to stop murdering peaceful civilians."

Although fighting did ease on the front lines south of Grozny, the ceasefire scheduled to take effect during the meeting was violated repeatedly. Chechen sources said that Russian armour had attempted to break through rebel lines 35 miles south of the Chechen capital.

In spite of the apparent failure of what had been billed as the first serious peace effort, Sandor Meszaros, the head of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe delegation in Grozny, said that the two sides had agreed in principle to meet again to discuss a ceasefire.

Although the OSCE has little diplomatic leverage, neither side can afford to ignore its mediation role.

The separatists need to portray themselves as the victims and cannot afford to ignore any peace efforts brokered by an international group.

Moscow, which has maintained that the war is an internal affair, is also sensitive to international opinion. It must support the OSCE since it is promoting the organisation as an alternative to Nato.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chirac aide linked to scandal

Paris: Georges Perol, a political associate and personal friend of Jacques Chirac for more than 30 years, has been placed under investigation over a fake invoicing racket that allegedly financed the French President's neo-Gaullist party (Susan Bell writes).

M Perol, 69, former head of the Paris public housing board, is the latest in a string of Gaullist officials implicated in the scandal over fake invoices involving housing in the Paris region.

Peking move

Hong Kong: Officials will try to save the UN women's conference in Peking in August by seeking a compromise between China and groups upset by the parallel unofficial meeting's remote venue.

Acropolis shut

Athens: Some of Greece's most famous historic attractions — including the Acropolis in Athens — were closed to tourists as museum workers began a two-day strike over a pay rise demand. (AFP)

Lebanon shuffle

Beirut: Rafik Hariri, the Lebanese Prime Minister, appointed a new 30-strong Government excluding his main opponents, Suleiman Franjeh and Michel Samaha, both pro-Syrian. (AFP)

Child deal

Dhaka: Bangladeshi clothes manufacturers said that they wanted to renegotiate a modified accord with Unicef to end child labour in the export-oriented garment industry by September 1997. (AFP)

Killer shark

Surva: A Fijian fisherman died after a 12ft shark leapt into his anchored 16ft boat off the remote Waya island and attacked him while he slept. The shark almost tore off his right leg and hand. (Reuters)

Threat to opera

Paris: The troubled Paris Opéra faces another crisis today as a proposed strike by a minority of technicians over a pay rise threatens to cancel the premiere of Bellini's *Capuleti ed i Montecchi*.

Hole in the wall

Jerusalem: The Old City acquired a "new" entrance when Israeli archaeologists reopened the 13th-century Tancred's Gate, 6ft 6ins wide and 5ft high, near the Dung Gate. (Reuters)

Starring Rolls

Monaco: Charlie Chaplin's black 1931 Rolls-Royce, the Phantom II Croydon, which he bought at the height of his career, has been sold at an auction here for 735,000 francs (£91,000). (AFP)

Swing to Right likely in Spain protest vote

FROM EDWARD OWEN IN MADRID

SPAIN'S first major swing to the Right since Franco died nearly 20 years ago is forecast in municipal and regional elections to be held on Sunday.

The ruling Socialists are embroiled in numerous corruption scandals after over 12 years in power and face the highest unemployment rate in Europe. The clearest indication of a protest vote against

them will be in the nationwide vote in the municipalities. Elections will take place for only 13 of the country's 17 regional parliaments.

Opinion polls predict that the Centre Right Popular Party, led by José María Aznar, 42, will obtain around 42 per cent of the vote, and the Socialists of Felipe González, 52, the Prime Minister, only 28 per cent.

Spy master Wolf urges amnesty for ex-Stasi agents

By ANNE McELVOY

MARKUS WOLF, who has never accepted the jurisdiction of the courts of the Federal Republic of Germany over his activities during nearly three decades as head of East German foreign intelligence, yesterday added his voice to calls for a general amnesty of former agents of the vanished communist state.

"Which country am I supposed to have betrayed?" he asked the Düsseldorf court that sentenced him to seven years' imprisonment for high treason. "I was always loyal to my country and you would not expect me, in my job, to be loyal to West Germany." The united

Germany's highest court this week effectively agreed with him, ruling that citizens from the East who spied on the old West Germany "from the territory of the German Democratic Republic" could not be prosecuted for treason, since their actions were in line with that country's constitution. Strictly speaking, this does not rule out further cases against Herr Wolf's former agents in the field. But this will be of academic interest only.

"There ought now finally to be an end to legal prosecutions," Herr Wolf told the magazine *Super Illu*, referring to all the people who worked for East Berlin's hated Ministry for State Security (Stasi). It is now virtually unthinkable that any

Eastern agent will face further legal consequences, although West Germans revealed to have spied for the "Enlightenment", as Herr Wolf's service was known, are not included in the decision and could still face prison sentences.

Herr Wolf inspires powerful and divided feelings. His suave manner makes him a welcome guest on television talk shows and some of his former compatriots still exhibit pride in the man whose spy service was admitted, even by opponents, to be one of the world's best.

The decision means that the seven-year jail sentence meted out to him, but suspended until the Constitutional Court's decree, will not be enacted.



Wolf: his spy network was one of the best

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Limited attack near Pale restores pride of peacekeepers but risks Serb backlash

Airstrike gamble meant as warning to warring sides

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Nato airstrike yesterday was more than just a response to Bosnian Serb violations. The bombing, as so often in the past in the "peacekeeping war" in Bosnia-Herzegovina, was also a reminder to the fighting factions on the ground that the United Nations, allied with Nato, was still in business.

After all the recent talk of withdrawal and the increasing feeling that the UN role in Bosnia was becoming less and less viable, there was a danger that the warring factions, particularly the Serbs, could cock a snook at Nato without fear of reprisal.

In more than three years since UN troops began to deploy to Bosnia, the UN's credibility as a peacekeeping force has been one of the key issues both in checking the level of violence in the war and helping to promote peace.

Airstrikes, above all, came to be seen as the litmus test of the UN's and Nato's willingness to get their hands dirty in a war where any action can have unpredictable consequences.

When Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose was commander of UN forces in Bosnia, airstrikes became a

symbol of his determination to act tough. For the first six months of his tenure, it was possible to believe that the UN, backed by the mighty firepower of Nato bombers, would see off the Serbs and bring peace by threatening instant retaliation if they stepped out of line.

This perception quickly changed when the airstrikes that did take place managed only to pinprick damage and put Nato bombers and UN troops on the ground in potentially grave danger. As one senior British military source said of the surface-to-air missile attack on a Royal Navy Sea Harrier over Gorazde in April last year: "A £25 million plane was hit by an £8,000 missile while trying to target an old tank worth nothing".

Nevertheless, throughout 1994, when General Rose was in charge, Nato jets helped to enforce the heavy weapons exclusion zone around Sarajevo, shot four Serb aircraft out of the sky south of Banja Luka, bombed and strafed around Gorazde to protect UN troops, and hit a Serb anti-tank gun and a tank near the Bosnian capital.

But did all this action help or undermine Nato's credibility?

Did it win accolades or spell doom for General Rose? And did it promote the cause of peace? The air raids certainly provided big headlines and turned General Rose into a folk hero one moment and the bad boy the next, but the overall result was that the UN became disillusioned and bombing was as good as struck off the list of options for the future.

Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith, who took over from General Rose in January, was always going to be a lower profile commander, but he must have despaired to discover that his immediate political boss, Yasushi Akashi, the UN envoy in Zagreb, was against launching airstrikes.

Two weeks ago, when General Smith applied to him to request a Nato raid, he was turned down. To the outside world, this was an admission that the Serbs could get away with anything. Nato's deterrence capability was dealt a serious blow. Yesterday's raid will have done something to restore Nato pride.

A senior American diplomat said: "The warring parties in Bosnia have to believe that a threat to launch airstrikes will lead to an attack. Otherwise the policy of deterrence has no credibility. There has to be a place for the application of military force. The trouble with the policy towards Bosnia is that we have never been able to apply enough military pressure, political pressure or economic pressure to stop the fighting."

The gamble with yesterday's raid is that the Serbs may decide they have little to lose by continuing to defy the UN and Nato. Whatever action Nato takes, they know from experience that it will be limited because the alliance does not have the mandate to mount punitive raids. Their attacks in Bosnia are about sending political and military signals, not about taking sides against the Serbs.



A wounded civilian is carried into Kosevo hospital in Sarajevo yesterday, one of two people injured when a shell hit a residential area

Milosevic plots path through Serb labyrinth

By MISHA GLENNY

THE games played by Serb politicians are becoming ever more byzantine after the breakdown of talks between the Americans and the Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, in the week that Nato launched air strikes against Bosnian Serb targets in Pale. The negotiations had been expected to lead to Belgrade's recognition of the international borders of Bosnia-Herzegovina in exchange for some lifting of United Nations sanctions.

Both the Serbian leadership and Western diplomats in Belgrade have been keen to suggest that the deal is not yet dead. Nonetheless, signs are increasing that the Serbs of Bosnia and Croatia may soon play their trump card of unifying their two self-proclaimed states. That would heighten the possibility of the northern Balkans sliding into all-out war.

Mr Milosevic has always avoided threatening the unification of what are

known as the "western Serb lands". And the leaders of the Bosnian and Croatian Serbs have in the past pulled back from the brink.

Last weekend, however, the Croatian Serb parliament unanimously accepted a proposal from its foreign minister, Milan Babic, that Krajina, as the Croatian Serb region is known, should unite with the Bosnian Serbs.

The idea has been seized upon by Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader. Ever since he broke with Mr Milosevic last summer, he has considered unification the quickest way to undermine his power. The most mystifying aspect of this ritual concerns Mr Babic, regarded as solidly pro-Milosevic. "It is inconceivable

that Babic would play the unification game without Milosevic's approval. This either means that Milosevic is trying to pressurise the Americans or he is trying to lure Karadzic into a trap," said Braca Grubacic, an independent analyst in Belgrade.

The tactic is probably a bit of both. Talks with the Americans broke down over sanctions—which Mr Milosevic wants lifted so that the vote of all five permanent members of the Security Council is needed to reimpose them. Washington wants them suspended so that one vote would suffice. Talk of unification is a subtle hint that Belgrade can still make life much worse if it chooses.

Yet he has no intention of allowing

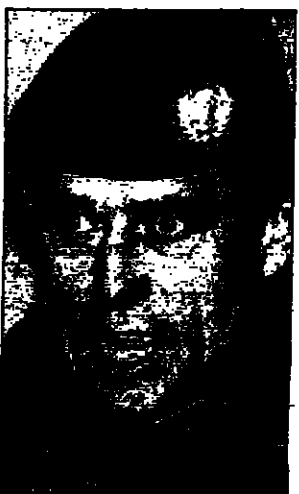
Mr Karadzic his moment of glory. He has built a safety device into Mr Babic's idea. Unification on the Krajina model would mean a federation. But a Bosnian Serb MP, who wanted to remain anonymous, said: "A federation is unacceptable—we want a centralised state which would later unite with Serbia and Montenegro."

Meanwhile there are the Serb armed forces. President Milosevic has been cultivating Ratko Mladic, head of the Bosnian Serb army, who ferociously attacked Mr Karadzic last month. The new head of the Croatian Serb army, Mile Mrksic, is believed to enjoy close relations with Mr Milosevic. Before any co-ordinated action by the Croatian and Bosnian Serbs, the military leadership is almost certain to refer to Mr Milosevic.

He is again using an external crisis to assert his primacy among the Serb factions. Most observers believe that he will not risk a big war to satisfy nationalist goals.



Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith, left, who took over from Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose



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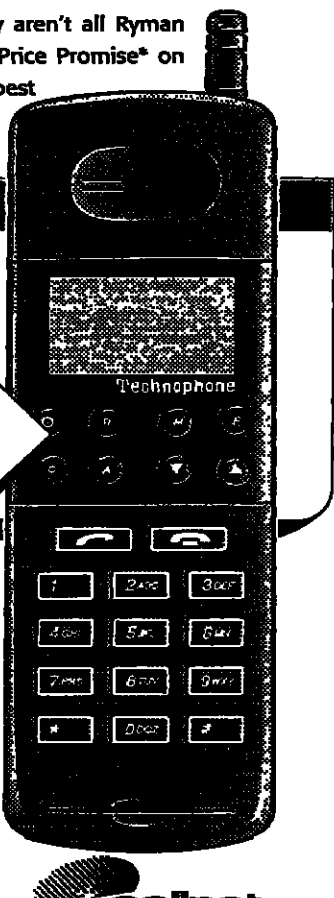
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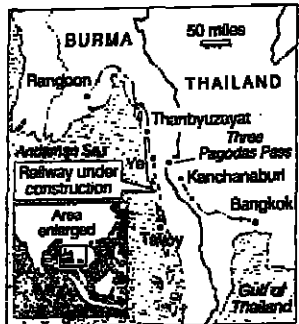


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Accounts of forced labour echo Japanese wartime treatment of allied prisoners

Slave army used to construct new Burma railway

FROM JAMES PRINGLE
AT THREE PAGODAS PASS
THAILAND

SLAVE labour is again being used to construct a railway in Burma, according to an opposition group fighting the country's hardline military regime. The Mon tribal group claims that people have died as a result of forced labour imposed by the State Law and Order Restoration Council. "Beatings are frequent and there is no food and medicine for conscripted workers," said a spokesman for the group. About 30,000 Burmese villagers have been press-ganged into building the 100-mile-long railway between the southern Burmese towns of Ye, in Mon state, and Tavoy, in the southernmost Tensasserim division. They are also being used to prepare the

ground for a 447-mile gas pipeline, which is to be buried in terrain which has been land-mined to guard against sabotage. That there is resistance to the pipeline is clear. Five members of a survey team were killed and 11 wounded at Kanbauk in a guerrilla attack in March for which no-one claimed responsibility. Disclosure of the new rail-

way comes just weeks after a plaque was unveiled at Three Pagodas Pass, honouring the 16,000 allied prisoners of war and 100,000 Asian slave labourers who died building the Burma Railway during the Second World War. The memorial traces the route of the railway, marking infamous death sites such as Hellfire Pass. The ex-servicemen who erected it included the engraved words: "Entrusted to future generations in the hope that the story of the Burma-Thailand railway will be remembered."

Three Pagodas Pass, historically the invasion route of Burmese armies into Thailand, was used by the Japanese invading Burma during the war. Near by, the two strands of the Burma railway, linked up, one from Thanbyuzayat in Burma, the



Nagase Takashi, right, a Japanese wartime guard, at the River Kwai yesterday with Buntom Wandee, an Indonesian former slave labourer

other from Kanchanaburi, on what is now known as the River Kwai. It is not possible to verify the latest stories of forced labour as the area is closed to foreigners. But a Bangkok-based diplomat said:

"We know that there is forced labour on the railway and on the building of Burmese Army barracks along the route to be taken by the pipeline."

As the Rangoon military tries to gain stronger control

in southern Burma, its forces are engaged in combating a sputtering insurgency by Mon and Karen guerrillas. The situation on the Thai-Burmese border has been described as "chaotic". According to one

diplomat, Mon and Karen refugees are no longer welcome in Thailand. But if they return to Burma, they risk being made to work on these projects.

Philip McDaniel, a missionary doctor at the Kwai River Christian Hospital near Sankhaburi, said: "People don't

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Babe Ruth outfit suffers third strike by thieves

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

FOR the third time in 70 years the pinstriped uniform worn by the legendary baseball player, Babe Ruth, has been stolen, adding yet another bizarre chapter to a tale of mystery, murder and robbery. The uniform, believed to have been worn by Ruth in 1924 and worth an estimated \$50,000 (£31,000), was stolen from a car in Manhattan on Wednesday, along with baseball trading cards valued at \$250,000.

Ruth wore the outfit again in 1942, when he played himself opposite Gary Cooper in the film *Pride of the Yankees*. The off-white flannel shirt and striped baseball shorts were then stored in the warehouse of a Hollywood costume company, but some time between 1942 and 1980 the uniform vanished.

In 1986, it reappeared in the possession of Dennis Walker, an eccentric offshore banker and sporting memorabilia collector. That year Walker was found murdered in a Las Vegas hotel room, apparently the victim of a Mafia assassination. Once again, the uniform had been stolen.

Three years later, after the American television programme *Unsolved Mysteries* explored the case of the missing uniform, another collector, Malcolm Jackson, handed the item to police in Long Island. They held on to it for seven years until 1992, when - because the uniform had not been reclaimed - Mr

Jackson obtained a court order to repossess it.

After passing through the hands of several more collectors, the uniform ended up in the possession of Mark Lassman, president of Sports Card Heaven International, who bought it for \$2,500. This week he flew to New York with a collection of souvenirs for a sporting memorabilia show.

Mr Lassman has offered a \$5,000 reward for the return of the elusive souvenir, which is not insured. "It's jinxed," he said.



Ruth: uniform a prized sporting souvenir

Brazil sends in troops to halt oil dispute

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

BRAZIL yesterday strengthened its military presence at key oil refineries in an effort to force petroleum workers to end a strike, and resolve the most serious crisis that President Cardoso's five-month-old Government has faced.

Hundreds of troops in armoured tanks and Jeeps have been mobilised since Wednesday, and sent into the Capuava, Paulina, and Vale do Paraiba refineries on the outskirts of São Paulo, Brazil's industrial capital.

Another 300 soldiers took over the Araucaria refinery in the southern state of Paraná

yesterday, ensuring workers finished their shifts. "Military intervention will protect the rights of those who want to return to work. The tanks were an inevitable measure," said President Cardoso.

The strike has caused fuel shortages in main cities and forced the country to import oil and gas supplies for industry. The strikers are demanding wage rises and opposing Senator Cardoso's proposals to privatise the state-owned Petrobras, South America's largest petroleum company. Hundreds have barricaded themselves in refineries.

THE TIMES

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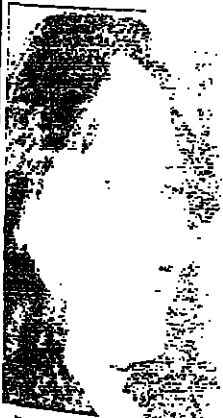
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Syrian concession on Golan opens door to peace deal

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

AMERICAN officials yesterday hailed Syria's concession over the Golan Heights as a breakthrough in the Middle East peace process.

They acknowledged, however, that the agreement over security did not deal with the core issues that have prevented peace with Israel for four years: the Syrian demand that Israel withdraw from all of the Golan Heights, and the Israeli requirement that Damascus consent to peace with full diplomatic relations.

The deal was described as more "baby-step diplomacy", the incremental process that has long characterised negotiations between the two states. But it is the first time they have agreed on anything since the current dialogue began in Madrid in 1991.

Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, plans to visit the region next month for the first time since March. His trip will be followed by meet-

ings in Washington between senior military officials from Israel and Syria to negotiate details on security arrangements. Dennis Ross, the State Department's chief negotiator in the Middle East talks, will travel to both countries next week to resolve any immediate differences before the talks begin in earnest.

US officials said a framework agreement — allowing the demilitarised zone in Israel to be smaller than that in Syria — had been secured in a telephone conversation this week between Mr Christopher and Farouk al-Sharaa, the Syrian Foreign Minister. Mr Christopher said: "This is an important development, but there are still significant gaps between the parties."

Osama el-Baz, a senior adviser to President Mubarak of Egypt, said: "We hope this will lead to a real breakthrough. It bodes well for finishing negotiations and reaching an

agreement by the end of the year, or in the first few weeks of next year."

According to senior Western officials, President Assad of Syria is well aware that if the Israeli Labour Party, which leads the ruling coalition Government, loses power in next year's election to the right-wing Likud, he would stand no chance of securing the return of the Golan Heights conquered by Israel in 1967.

Israeli officials hinted yesterday that Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister, might be willing to give back all the territory, over a three-year period, in return for a full peace treaty. He has never committed himself publicly beyond promising a referendum before any such move.

Yediot Ahronot, Israel's biggest-selling newspaper, commented: "American diplomacy has succeeded in breathing life into a process which seemed to be dying."



Sachin Tendulkar, the Indian cricketer, with his bride, Anjali Mehta, after their traditional Hindu wedding ceremony in Bombay yesterday. Tendulkar, 22, is regarded as one of the finest batsmen in the world

China rage over Seoul invitation to Taiwan

By JONATHAN MIRSKY

CHINA has threatened to cancel a trip by President Jiang Zemin to South Korea if it is preceded by a visit by President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan.

According to a South Korean politician, the warning was issued in March by a visiting member of the Chinese Communist Party's liaison office, and thus was given long before the announcement this week that President Lee had been permitted to visit America despite Chinese objections.

Mr Lee was invited to attend a 30-country meeting in September of the International Democratic Union, a conservative association. Mr Jiang's visit was tentatively scheduled for November.

Meanwhile, Peking's rage with Washington can be expected to increase if a proposal by Larry Pressler, a South Dakota senator, to sell Taiwan 17 F16 jet fighters that were originally intended for Pakistan, is implemented. The aircraft could serve as a counter to Chinese jets recently bought from Russia.

Daughter of Dayan in Nazi row

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER

Yael Dayan, the infant terrible of Israeli politics and daughter of the late war hero Moshe Dayan, has provoked a furore by linking Israeli treatment of the Palestinians with that by Nazis of Jews.

The Labour Knesset member's remarks were made in Germany this week where she was part of an Arab-Jewish delegation.

"No cakumny heaped on Israel is as obscene, immoral and galling as a comparison between the Jewish state and Nazi Germany," responded the *Jerusalem Post*.

Ms Dayan asked the Germans to help the Palestinians, saying they were Israel's victims. "I feel I have obligations, like you, to try to help the State of Israel because you have certain obligations to it and because they were your victims," she said.

Assad Assad, a member of the right-wing Likud party who was also on the trip, said: "I was stunned by the comparison and lack of sensitivity." But Ms Dayan said it was time to finish with Israel's persecution complex.



Dayan: Israel must finish with persecution complex

Secret list alleges debt defaults by India elite

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

THOUSANDS of India's richest and most powerful citizens were named yesterday as defaulters on vast loans from nationalised banks. The list had been kept secret by the Government for fear of upsetting such influential people.

The borrowers apparently include senior politicians, a former ambassador, newspaper-owners, industrialists, princesses, property dealers and big-time brokers — a *Who's Who* of India. The *Pioneer* newspaper, which disclosed the story, named many of the alleged defaulters.

The total outstanding loans amount to 300 billion rupees (£6.19 billion) held by 5,729 people: the smallest loan held by any of them is £20,600, a formidable sum by Indian standards. Opposition MPs had vainly demanded publication of the list. It was uncovered by a Communist MP who gave it to *The Pioneer*.

The list was compiled by the Reserve Bank of India and headed "confidential". Many individuals and firms are named more than once.

Even after defaulting on one loan, many reportedly managed to use their influence to persuade banks to lend them more. According to *The Pioneer*, defaulters managed to borrow another 450 billion rupees.

Bad debts have weakened India's banking system. Writing off loans to farmers, as a populist gesture, has also undermined the industry. Despite economic reforms, there has been no significant move to reform the banks or to privatise the industry.

Bugging furore mars Keating Tokyo visit

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

A VISIT to Tokyo by Paul Keating, the Australian Prime Minister, has been marred by revelations that Japan has bugged one of his country's embassies.

Australian intelligence sources yesterday tried to play down reports that nine overseas diplomatic missions had been penetrated by foreign agents in recent years — including hi-tech Japanese eavesdropping on the embassy in Jakarta, the Indonesian capital.

The disclosure came as Mr Keating began his visit, much to the discomfort of the Labor leader and his retinue of minders. The Japanese opera-

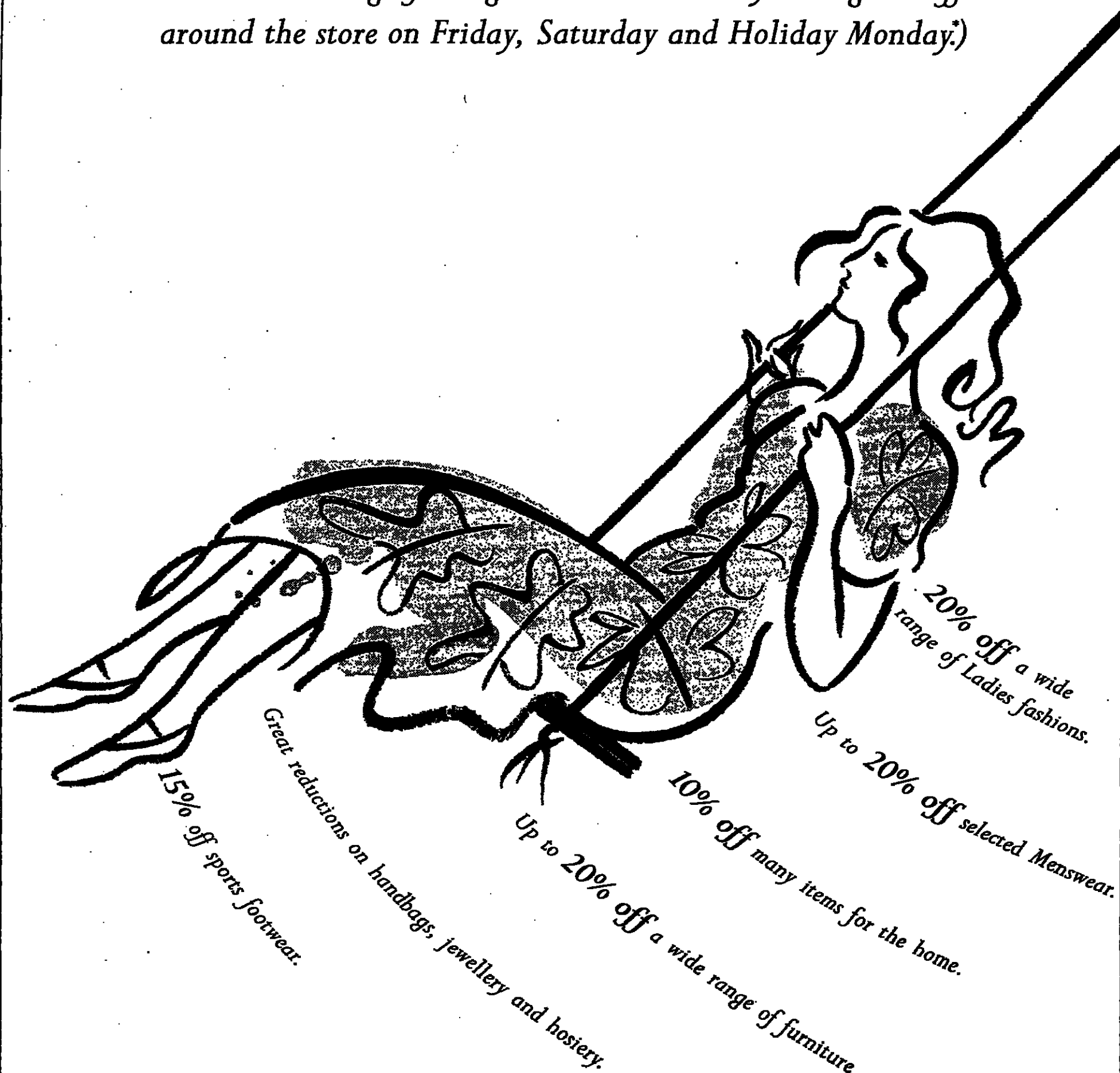
tion and several similar intelligence-gathering exercises involved Australian embassies in Moscow, Peking, Warsaw, Belgrade, Ankara, Rangoon and Brasilia, as well as Jakarta. Details emerged when Michael Costello, the Secretary of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, gave a security briefing to various heads-of-mission on a visit to Canberra. They were shown eavesdropping devices found in several Australian diplomatic missions and official residences.

In Jakarta, the Japanese directed an infra-red beam on to a window of the Australian Embassy 650 yards away to detect vibrations from the window panes caused by conversations.

Canberra intelligence sources emphasised that no such breaches had occurred in the past two years. But Tim Fischer, the leader of the opposition National Party, said: "It is an irony that on the very day Paul Keating commences his formal activities in Tokyo, there is a revelation that a Japanese operation may have been involved in penetrating Australian embassy security. There are high stakes today, not only with regard to defence matters, but particularly with regard to trade, and these must be guarded."

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Forget-Me-Not

Eren will soon go to prison for writing a newspaper article her government didn't like. How much longer before you join us?

Eren Keskin is a lawyer. In September 1994, she wrote an article in Turkey's free press. The government disliked it so much they tried Eren and sentenced her to two years in prison for writing 'separatist propaganda'.

Eren appealed but the sentence was upheld. She is not yet in jail, but each day could be her last day of freedom.

As a supporter of human rights in a country with an atrocious human rights record, Eren is used to threats. While researching disturbances in a prison on behalf of a human rights group, she was shot at.

Recently her telephone rang and a man's voice told her, 'We are measuring your coffin' - a threat not to be lightly dismissed in Turkey, a country where more than a hundred members of one opposition party have been killed or 'disappeared' in circumstances clearly implicating the security forces. Turkey may be a democracy, but since 1992, eleven journalists and distributors of one newspaper group have been killed. So much for free speech.

Eren became a target because of her work as a defender of human rights and as a lawyer. At one incident, Eren was arrested by police who took turns to hit and insult her. They seemed doubly offended by the fact that this defence lawyer was also a woman.

Amnesty International works tirelessly all over the world to protect people's basic human rights. We expose governments which violate the UN Declaration of Human Rights which they have signed and sworn to uphold. We won't let them get away with it. There is too much suffering in the world and it will always be with us if we turn a blind eye to it and pretend it has nothing to do with us.

Brave people like Eren Keskin deserve our help. We are not always successful, but the more supporters we have, the more successful we'll be. Please join us today, because for someone somewhere, tomorrow will always be too late. Please pick up your pen. Do it now.

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Joanna Pitman talks to Dr Alan Borg about his plans to reinvigorate the V&A

The man who can play to the galleries

It seems altogether fitting that the man named last week to the fabled role of director of the Victoria & Albert Museum should count among his middle names that of our most celebrated naval hero.

Dr Alan Charles Nelson Borg, CBE, FSA, currently director of the Imperial War Museum (IWM), quickly apologises for a perceived shortcoming on this front. "I'm afraid I can't offer you family links with Lord Nelson," he says. "The name comes from my Swedish grandfather, who came to England and changed his surname from Nielson-Borg to Nelson-Borg. The double-barrelled bit has gone but Nelson has remained."

Two generations have obliterated all traces of the Swede in him, too. At first glance, Dr Borg could easily be taken for a military man or a senior executive of a first-division merchant bank. He is immediately distinguished by his height, erect and firm-shouldered carriage, and the natural leonine grace of a former sportsman (he was a fencing Blue at Oxford).

A distinct public-school Britishness is there, too, in the charcoal-grey pinstripes, splendidly woolly even on a muggy May afternoon, and the razor-sharp creases of his slightly frayed cotton cuffs. His forehead is high and smooth and his face so open it could be described as boyish. The moment he smiles, about 20 of his 52 years disappear.

"When I move on October 1, it will be 13 years since I started at the Imperial War Museum. The V&A is one of the greatest museums in the world. It cannot fail to be a marvellous place to work."

All eyes will be on him as he takes over from Elizabeth Esteve-Coll who, after several stormy years of vilification in the media for her handling of the museum, is heading for more agreeable pastures as Vice-Chancellor of the University of East Anglia.

There is no denying that the V&A, as one of Britain's top three museum collections, besides the British Museum and the National Gallery, has an exceedingly poor image. "I'm actually being handed a museum in rather good shape... but, yes, there is a lot of work to do repairing, developing and improving the museum."

The facts provide a dolorous tale. The dark and forbidding galleries are miserably under-visited, the fabric of the building is crumbling, its core collections poorly maintained and displayed, its staff demoralised and its funds insufficient, and its recent efforts at splendid temporary

exhibitions have failed to pull in enough visitors.

Dr Borg has turned museums around before. When he started at the IWM in 1982, it was in poor shape. Within two years, he had conceived and implemented a five-year, £20 million plan that has expanded the institution, revived its impact and profile and increased visitor numbers by 20 per cent without sacrificing intellectual or artistic standards for populist appeal.

"War is not a popular subject, but we've managed a lot here," he says. "The V&A should be easier in that sense." Dr Borg has identified two broad objectives: to implement a huge programme to repair the fabric of the building and to redisplay galleries, particularly the neglected British ones; secondly, to develop the unused Boilerhouse site into a major extension.

"It's a real privilege to take an institution like this through the millennium landmark. There are all sorts of interesting problems. The facades are all listed, but we might be able to get away with a Louvre-type pyramid..."

The vision is gleeful, just the sort of thing that had occupants of Brooks's Club arm-chairs snorting: "Over my dead body" when Tim Clifford (he of the National Galleries of Scotland and *The Three Graces* controversy) came up as a candidate for the job.

But Dr Borg is an art historian at heart, an expert on medieval sculpture who also knows a thing or two about military collections, having spent eight years as keeper of the armouries in the Tower of London and four years establishing the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia.

"I have experience in redisplaying galleries and setting up new museum sites. What has changed over the past few years is the realisation that simply putting things in a museum and forgetting about them is no good. Everything has to be maintained and that requires ever more funds."

The charm and the boyish smile disguise a steely nerve and the determination underneath of a hunter, tooth and claw. He must be no less in this dog-eat-dog world of fund-raising, where dozens of famous institutions are doing the rounds cap in hand, and he will have to find £7 million every year to supplement the Government's £31 million contribution to the museum's £38 million budget.

Essential, then, to have a Filofax bulging with the names of potential sponsors,

and the power to charm the deep-pocketed from all corners and cultures of the earth. Last week, he was in action in Washington, eyeball to eyeball across a \$1,000-a-place dinner table, trying to charm a fresh trickle of funds out of the American rich. "I've been working with Chariton Heston - he was a rear gunner in the war - to raise money for a new IWM building. Hollywood's a ghastly place but you have to do it. I found myself sitting next to Bob Hope the other day."

The vision of the utterly reasonable, civilised, self-effacing and scholarly Dr Borg rubbing shoulders with America's most viciously successful cigar-chomping movie moguls and Hollywood stars floats improbably before my eyes. But it seems that he handles these events with presidential ease and turns vigorous, even pugnacious, when necessary. This time he came home with \$200,000 (a good start). He has a history of working wonders and fat cheques out of the Sultan of Brunei and John Paul Getty II.

Yet the necessity to define everything in terms of funding has not obscured his vision of what a museum is for. "Museums are not run as businesses to make money. It's nice if they do, but the primary purpose is to educate through preserving the heritage and displaying it to the largest possible spread of people."

"The British are still generally very lazy about their great cultural institutions, but to fulfil our educational role, we must give them the stimulus to visit. I'm a great believer in splendid exhibitions as a way of enticing them in. But that means getting sponsors."

His predecessor's valiant efforts with exhibitions reached its lowest ebb last summer with the contemporary fashion exhibition *Street Style* sponsored by Smirnoff. Large numbers of mods, rockers, punks and goths invited to the opening party turned up in full kit, over-estimated their toler-



Dr Alan Borg: "The museum is in rather good shape... but there is a lot of work to do"

ance of the refreshments and ended up brawling and vomiting in the V&A's august surroundings.

A particularly unpleasant lesson. But Dr Borg is sound on the importance of good public relations and image. "The place must be welcoming and we mustn't make people uncomfortable with embar-

assing voluntary entry fees. Fixed fees or none is better."

If image is his main challenge, he begins on sound footing with his own. Held in affectionate respect by his IWM staff, he has made an effort to learn the names of his 450 permanent employees. He relishes all the gritty details, plunging into debate over

everything from label sizes to café menus, and he does a monthly nitpicking inspection tour. The V&A's 850 staff would be advised to put themselves on red alert on October 1, and not to expect to hide behind anonymity for long. Dr Borg intends to get to know and get the best out of every last one of them.

'Family tradition has it that I was a very quiet baby...'



The making of Margaret Thatcher.

For the first time, Margaret Thatcher writes about her personal life, in exclusive extracts from "The Path to Power", appearing only in The Sunday Times.

This Sunday, she talks about the formation of her character and values during her upbringing as the daughter of a grocer in Grantham. There are also exclusive childhood photographs from her personal archive, never published before. Don't miss this unique and fascinating insight into the making of Margaret Thatcher.

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Also this Sunday: FREE sailing lessons for every reader and the chance to win a Mediterranean sailing holiday and a Topper dinghy.

All for the love of your publisher

THE word is out that Marika Cobbold, the romantic novelist, has run off with her publisher, piquantly, just as her new book opens with the plight of a woman writer whose husband objects to her ink-stained nightdresses. Grim for the families, to whom all sympathy, but it must be said the story does resonate. Women, you see, do rather fall for publishers.

Normally, we restrain ourselves from running off with them, but the urge is definitely there. Like the first pash on the English teacher, the crush on the gynaecologist and the urge to make rock-cakes for the vicar, we never quite outgrow it. And publishers are special. Think what they do for you!

They take you out to lunch, let you ramble on, and encourage you to think you are wonderful. Husbands do not do this. Publishers share your innermost imaginings in the rustling intimacy of typescript: they give you money and encourage you to dress up for awards dinners. Your success does not threaten them: they deeply want you to succeed. What husband is so selflessly committed to his wife's glory? Apart, that is, from Peter Bottomley?

Publishers send you flowers; they use girly vocabulary, proclaiming themselves "thrilled" and you "super". When you get bad reviews they ring up with comforting gossip about how unheeded, corrupt and ugly that critic is, and

how his paper is going broke.

No doubt academics and heavy-duty intellectuals can resist all this, and probably they get less of it. But if a woman mid-market novelist hits the popular button, she is a precious commodity, much fussed over. And since these novels tend to be written by weatherbeaten wives and mothers, unaccustomed to pampering, it dazzles them. The publisher is the prince, whose kiss awoke your sleeping talent. A woman can be



LIBBY PURVES

comfortably assured that he won't mind ink-stains on her nightie either. Each one, to him, is laden with steamy promise of another 20,000-a-month hardback, simultaneous audiobook and residual rights.

The wonder is that all bestselling women do not hurl themselves at publishers. The trend has probably only been held in check during previous decades by the convention that publishers disguised themselves as men twice their age, wrapped in inch-thick tweed, smelling powerfully of pipe-tobacco and quoting Ovid. These days they have to impress their financiers, so they wear sharp suits accessorised with horn-rimmed Hugh Grant glasses. Presentable yet approachable, powerful yet desperately needing you... these are men to dream of. Let me at them!

Since you ask, my own publisher is a woman. The men clearly saw me coming, and hid.

سكزا من الأصل

سكزا من الأصل

What is it like being married to a woman who can climb Everest and still make great profiteroles? Giles Coren reports

My wife the spiderwoman

In the three short hours I spent in Fort William, talking to a man whose wife had just climbed Mount Everest, Ben Nevis claimed a life. At 9.30am, as I left the station to head for Nevis Range Ski Centre where Jim Ballard is fielding international media inquiries about his wife's success, the helicopters were already in the air. By midday they had returned with a body.

The 19-year-old woman was the fifteenth person, said a local man, to die on the mountain this year — a victim of the demon that stalks every mountaineer, from the 4,000ft of Britain's highest peak to the 29,028ft of Everest. Like a reproachful parent, the snowy peak of Ben Nevis glares down at the town, daring the bearded ants that bustle with their crampons to challenge its authority.

But to Alison Hargreaves, Nevis is no more threatening than the local leisure-centre climbing wall. Here she climbs with her children — Tom is six, Kate four — and here she practised for her latest jaunt, the first ascent of Everest by a woman, "unmasked and alone".

If danger is one of the things that inspires a climber (they call it "feeding the rat"), it is something different for the husband on the ground. "I hope I have the mental ability," says Jim Ballard, "to divide my mind up when she is on a major climb, and prepare a section of it for Alison paying the ultimate price. And I have always had a plan in my head for how I would deal with her family, and with the future of our children."

"I am not generally superstitious," he says, "but I make a point of never saying goodbye, just au revoir. And I don't see her off any more with the kids. That is the only time when Katie might wobble a bit, her little lip would go, and her eyes would water." Such is the kindergarten of hard knocks.

Mr Ballard was brought up in working-class Sheffield, and puts

his sanguinity down to his upbringing. "Alison's the same," he says. "The day Tom was born we had gone bouldering. I was halfway up a rock when Alison said she had to go for a pee. A minute later came this little voice from the bushes. 'You'd better come down Jim, my waters have broken.'"

Captain Oates, you feel, could hardly have made less fuss about giving birth.

made the summit, the place was surrounded by television people, but at Kate's playgroup there is a rota system, and it was my turn to look after the children. The press boys were a bit surprised when I said 'right, I'm off to playgroup.'"

Inevitably, Mr Ballard finds himself described as a New Man. He no longer runs the climbing shops where he met Alison as an 18-year-old "Saturday girl", and, while he is a climber himself, he has turned his attention to writing a series of books "about how to take your kids to dangerous places". This allows him to fulfil a traditional mothering role at home.

"I wouldn't know what a New Man was if I fell over him in the street. Where I was brought up everyone was expected to muck in. And with National Service, men didn't think twice about sewing on a button. There was nothing girly about a 6ft guardsman doing his ironing."

"I do the cooking when Alison's not here. The kids have a good set menu, but it's not exactly wide-ranging: pasta is my main thing, and I make a vegetarian sausage triple-decker sandwich that'll take your head off."

"Alison is a superb cook, when she has the time, and does the most exquisite profiteroles I have ever had. She is

one of those annoying girls who is good at everything. They say she could be the greatest climber ever, regardless of sex. She also skis like a dream, and runs, swims and cycles as well as anyone. The only thing she can't do is play golf — but that is because she was such a good hockey-player. "He is proud rather than boastful. "We decided that we would like two children, a boy and then a girl. So, being Alison, that is what she had."

In the most tasteful possible way, is it her climbing that makes her attractive to him? "Well, she doesn't look like female mountaineers used to look, like those British tennis players always did, like a horse. If you see her in Lycra, she



Jim Ballard with his children, Tom and Kate: "I wouldn't know what a New Man was if I fell over him in the street," he says

has the legs of a modern runner, or one of those Californian girls in work-out videos. The muscle is there, but it isn't bulging. She is sleek, like a seal. But sex-appeal is all in the mind, isn't it?"

Again, he attributes his lack of romance to a Yorkshire thing. "She can be stunningly beautiful," he says, "in the right light." And if she decided to put on a dress and

bake bread? "Then I would respect her equally. I am not her keeper. Although with all the sponsorship deals she has to wear things like fleece jackets, that don't really work with a skirt."

Questions of jealousy seem not to apply. "I have some skill as a climber, but Alison's talent is unique. I would love to climb Everest, but the only way now is to

do it like her, without oxygen or a team — to do anything else would be like beating Linford Christie on a motorbike when he was on foot all the time."

"The great thing about being an older husband [at 49, he is 15 years older than his wife] is that I can control my head. And I understand about living with genius, being tolerant but firm. If she had

had an intense relationship with someone her own age, it would have destroyed them both. Also, as a Yorkshireman I don't go in for all the lovey stuff — we don't have emotions up North."

Thus it is that he copes with the excesses of a wife the locals call "the spiderwoman". Behind every great woman there really should be this sort of man.

Let's face it, infants stink and so does motherhood

Considering how long it has been going on, it is curious that motherhood never spawned a literature, an oeuvre of its own. Certainly, there were and are plenty of headmistresses how-to books of the Miriam Stoppard and Penelope Leach sort, providing useful but ultimately banal advice on ounces of formula, motor development and diced carrots. Motherhood as science was fully covered, but motherhood as art was sadly neglected.

In the last year or two, however, there has been an outpouring of words from mothers — essays, memoirs and fiction which are sophisticated enough also to show the complexities, the humour, the spiritual and the dark side of motherhood which go unmentioned on the pregnancy and childcare shelves.

The key to the sudden success of these new works of literature is that they are written by mothers who were once human beings with lives, as opposed to professional childcare experts. They do not patronise. They say the previously unsayable. They admit the worst nightmares and extraordinary, silly joys which were previously not discussed in public. By word of mouth,

Bonny babies be blown: Kate Muir celebrates the note of realism sweeping through the bookshelves

they have become bestsellers in America with the message: birth stinks, the first three months of parenting stink; it's possibly worth it.

Leading the mummy-literati is Louise Erdrich, author of four fine novels and mother of six, three of whom are adopted teenagers. Her book *The Blue Jay's Dance* — a birth year is a non-fiction account of what it is to be a parent — "an experience shattering, ridiculous, earthbound, deeply warm, rich, profound". Taking her baby daughter with her every day to her writing cabin opposite her farm in New Hampshire, Erdrich struggles with the conflicting demands of work and motherhood. Loving an infant, she says, "is uncomfortably close to self-erasure, and in the face of it one's fat ambitions, desperations, private icons and urges fall away into a dream-like before that haunts and forces itself into the present with tough persistence."

Writers like Erdrich also tackle the awful thoughts

which mothers can hardly admit to themselves, but most experience the desire, at 4am, after hours of screaming, to throw the baby out of the window. The solution is to let rip with the fullness of her vocabulary: "Alone with her, beyond tears, shaking sometimes, I use my most soothing tone of voice to call her names. The tone helps her, the words help me."

Annie Lamott, another novelist, admits to similar feelings in *Operating Instructions* — a journal of my son's first year. "I have had some terrible visions lately, like of holding him by the ankle and whacking him against the wall, the way you 'cure' an octopus on the dock." She knows she would never, ever lay a finger on her son Sam, and runs to him at the merest cry, yet the expression of such emotions — the desire just to plunk him outside on the doorstep on a particularly bad night — provides an enormous relief to those brought up with the self-sacrificing rules of Dr Spock.



Erdrich, mother of six and author of four fine novels

Somehow literary non-fiction, with its shades of grey rather than black and white, is a better medium for the amorphous subject of motherhood and fatherhood. As for birth itself, Erdrich complains that

the advice books dare to describe contractions as "discomfort" when "unbearable pain" does not do the ship-inside-a-bottle feeling justice. One mother, when asked to describe the experience of giving

birth said: "It's like having your hand chopped off as a criminal in Iran — would you suggest breathing exercises or aromatherapy to help him?"

The new literature is balm for those who fail to live up to the high expectations of traditional advice. The very idea that anyone would want to do sit-ups or something dubious called "pelvic tilts" days after the grim experience of labour is ridiculous. Great women novelists, it turns out, do not have stomach muscles that snap back into position within days. Lamott describes her stomach as looking "like a waterbed covered with flannel. When I lie on my side my stomach lies politely beside me, like a puppy." Essential truths like these have made Lamott's book a sell-out in New York.

Of course, there has always been a high literature of motherhood, but nothing that really got down to the nitty gritty. Literary mothers include Anna Karenina and Madame Bovary, both of whom came to a bad end, and Paul Morel's stifling, soul-destroying mother in D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. Neither can we forget the Jewish mama in *Portnoy's Complaint*, or indeed Nor-

man's mother, Mrs Bates, on celluloid.

But these works were all written by men, and while providing fine insight into mother-child psychology, they do not supply the detail which women obviously crave. Although fathering is now being

'Alone with her, beyond tears, shaking sometimes, I call her names'

taken much more seriously, and men are often single parents, the statistics still around: the average American father spends 42 minutes alone with his toddler per day. The great fathering book has yet to be written.

Until fairly recently, author-mothers were a rarity — the Brontës, Austen, and Eliot were all childless. Now, however, the ranks include Nobel-prizewinning Toni Morrison, whose character in *Beloved* kills her daughter rather than

have her grow up a slave. Her mother-love was "too thick", someone explains.

There are dozens of others, including Alice Walker, Barbara Kingsolver, Erica Jong, Alice Munro, Angela Carter, and Anne Tyler, whose new novel *Ladder of Years* is published this month in America. It tackles the topic of a mother who is so frustrated by her lot that she runs away, leaving her three teenage children with their father.

While posing as fact, books such as *Superkids in thirty minutes a day* may tell parents about nappies, but only fiction will tell them that the average baby uses seven thousand nappies in its lifetime. It requires writers like Lamott to risk telling us that she once lost her baby down the back of the toilet, and that she tried sucking his dummy in front of the television, but gave up in case she became addicted.

Her heart-wrenching pride in her son also comes through. One day, she is so delighted by his improved strength at three months that she leaves this message on her answering machine: "We're out celebrating National Sam Lamott Improved Neck Control Week, but our operators are standing by to take your call..."

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Don't just react: initiate

Graham Mather says Britain must vary Europe's geometry

Yesterday's Cabinet meeting did not mark a turning-point in Britain's European policy. The Cabinet sub-committee was given a broad endorsement to continue its preparations for the 1996 inter-governmental conference. The British Government will resist any more qualified majority voting, any collapsing of the inter-governmental pillars, and any massive extension of European Parliament powers.

So far, so good for most British Conservatives. The gradual build-up is in line with Foreign Office thinking. Mandarins do not wish Britain's hand to be played too early. They point to the last-minute success of John Major in negotiating the Maastricht opt-out. Much better, they argue, to allow others to set out their stalls while Britain hopes for a minimalist outcome.

Yet this is the riskiest strategy of all. It fails to take account of how closely Europe's agenda-setters are watching British reactions to their proposals. Karl Lamers, the European policy architect of Germany's CDU/CSU, shows no signs of retreating from his ambitious centralising aims to move power away from member states and towards European institutions. Chancellor Kohl speaks of a Maastricht II and Maastricht III in which the federalist programme will be pursued patiently but ineluctably.

Sensing the political wind, the European Commission is making increasingly bold attacks on Britain's social chapter opt-out. In late 1994, only Commissioner Pádraig Flynn spoke openly in Brussels of ending the opt-out by 1996. This month, President Jacques Santer himself has made the same demand explicitly, publicly and in London.

Playing cards close to Britain's chest means that such initiatives are a one-way bet for the Commission. There is no disadvantage to attacking Britain's hard-won Maastricht successes, even though doing so is a patent attempt to reverse the treaty, as well as an abuse of the Commission's powers. The European Commission has no authority under the treaty to put forward such proposals.

Equally worrying for ministers is the risk of keeping a low profile will mean leaving it too late to build alliances in Europe. For example, the idea of stripping the Commission of its role in competition policy and handing that power to an independent authority is gaining ground. It is winning German and French support: yet the British Government seems to be too nervous to back the idea officially.

Most Conservatives want Britain to go further. We could demand a wide-ranging "agencification" of the European Commission itself. We could secure wide support for new ways of entrenching national parliaments in the European systems. There is backing both for a second chamber of national parliamentarians in the European Parliament and for a reformed

system of joint parliamentary committees. And there is plenty of support in European business circles for a significant cut in the powers of the European Court of Justice. European industry objects violently to the retrospective effects of recent court judgments.

Shifting to the front foot on these issues would transform the perception of Britain in Europe, which is of a reluctant and negative partner, lacking both will and skill to participate in shaping the European programme.

The shame is that Britain has much to offer. Our ten years' experience of decentralising government departments into autonomous agencies is tailor-made for export into the heart of the Commission. For the Commission has always lacked modern management structures and resembles an intellectual priesthood of the faith instead of an efficient agency with the skill to implement defined tasks.

Britain would win many friends if it were to insist that the Commission should shift its emphasis from proselytising to management.

French, Belgian and German national parliamentarians all currently complain that Europe is in danger of losing sight of the importance of national assemblies. Their astonishment would be matched by delight if Britain took the lead in Europe in promoting their cause.

Why not start a campaign to speed up privatisation and to phase out state aids in Europe by the signing of the 1996 treaty? This would give the Commission more constructive things to ponder than the ending of Britain's opt-out.

None of these ideas will flourish if Britain fails to promote them. Unless it does, the only movement will be one way — against variable geometry and towards federal integration.

In Europe, the result will be missed opportunities. At home, the consequence of failure to set out a principled position will be to dishearten Conservative activists. Labour understands this point very clearly. Its insistence that its Euro MPs tone down their federalism led three-quarters of them obediently to abstain in the Parliament's typically maximalist 1996 report. They were responding directly to their sense of British public opinion.

On July 1, a Reflection Group will begin to make formal preparations for the inter-governmental conference. David Davis, as Minister for Europe, is Britain's representative. It is essential that by then he is equipped with a positive package of European reforms: both to secure Britain's existing position and to offer any realistic chance of making Europe's future one of variable geometry.

The author is Conservative MEP for Hampshire North and Oxford, and president of the European Policy Forum.

PARLIAMENT RISES



More syndicate than sinning

Can I take out insurance against becoming a name at Lloyd's?

Yet again Lloyd's comes up for air. But at least I have something to show you. Despite all the millions of words spoken or written or published about Lloyd's of London (a good tranche of them contributed by me), I have only now found out that there actually was a man called Lloyd, some three hundred years ago, who had the idea. It is hard to guess what he would have thought about his brainchild today, when catastrophe after catastrophe pours Niagara-style into the laps of the sufferers.

Sufferers — and already I have used a word I should not have used, or at least not without examining the situation. Because, of course, in Lloyd's, there were and are people deserving every bruise and stab and fall, and there are other people who deserve only help and friendship and uplift, and there are people who cannot quite be classified in either category.

But let us begin with a story so dreadful that the mere thought of it chills the blood. I had heard of it some years ago, but I did not know the full details until now, from Adam Raphael's merciless book *Ultimate Risk*. Briefly, a trusted secretary, named Betty Atkins, was retiring after 25 years' service, and as a parting present her employer made her and a colleague, Silvia Hanton, Lloyd's names. Yes, I can see you shuddering already, but what I did not know until I read Raphael was that the boss who gave the parting presents did not help her, and nor did any person involved in this horror.

Horror, you say? When she, with her last forlorn hope, wrote to the then chairman of Lloyd's, Murray Lawrence, he told her she must do nothing "to prejudice the reputation of Lloyd's". (By an odd quirk of time, the three years of Mr Lawrence's chairmanship coincided with the announcements of the market losing more than five billion pounds.)

What words, what words! What wonderful words! "Do nothing to prejudice the reputation of Lloyd's." Say it aloud, readers, over breakfast if you can steel yourself so early in the morning: "...the reputation of Lloyd's... the reputation of Lloyd's." And that was not 300 years ago with the business run by the original Mr Lloyd: our Lloyd's was happy to roll in the mud, provided the money didn't run out. And in good time, the money did run out. The money? It had been turned into excuses. Been turned into? No: what was done, was

done by human beings, knowing what they did.

For what has been more or less shuffled off the board are two terrible truths, truths that hide behind anything not actually transparent. Yes, the American asbestos and hurricane disasters, together with the Piper Alpha and the Exxon Valdez tragedies (the "acts of God" which started the slide into the black hole), made the already shaky Lloyd's even more shaky. But nevertheless, those two truths are real, and the first one is that Lloyd's had been rotten with cheating and twisting from top to bottom. And the second of the two truths is that it had also been rotten with incompetence from side to side.

And until those dreadful poisons have been drained from Lloyd's, it is no use rummaging for bits and pieces to put the jigsaw right. Lloyd's has also, in its time, had its fill of real crime, men who were not just shifty but truly criminal, swindling and getting away with it, and getting away with it not because the whole top layer was criminal but because the whole top layer was inefficient. These were the big boys, but the small ones (and many of those were very substantial) added up to a formidable sheet. For there was another kind of robbery, and it was of those who took innocents to one side and told them that they could make great gains, but did not mention that they could also make great losses, or that the great losses that might ruin the suckers for everything they owned.

And just as there were a few very big shady ones making hay, but a large number of small ones making straw, so there were a very few very big incompetents ruining thousands by their ineptitude, and a much greater number of braggarts who merely inveigled the innocents next door to believe that being names would confer great honour on them.

In no particular order, we can list the bits that destroyed Lloyd's: greed, ignorance, incompetence, stupidity, wickedness, vanity, laziness, selfishness, innocence; take your pick. At one extreme, innocence destroyed Betty Atkins and Silvia Hanton: at the other extreme, dishonesty paid well for Peter Cameron-Webb.

And now we are told that if another £2.8 billion is thrown into the pot, the 17,000 names who have been screaming the place down will go quietly into a mere grumble or two. Dear reader, would you step into the shoes of the two men — David Rowland and Peter Middleton — whose appalling task has been to straighten out all the bent matter in today's Lloyd's, and who have been wading for two years now through the giant mountain of money, wickedness, paper,

noise, speculation and very little recompense, to sort out the last dregs of the Lloyd's names and the litigation? Well, would you go near the shoes, let alone step into them? For a million? Five million? Ten million? Ah, you must have cottoned on to the fact that the numbers are imaginary.

But have you not read Paul's Epistle to Timothy recently? You should have, because Paul was right. I know that practically everyone gets it wrong, by leaving out the first three words, but it is true — oh, it is true that "The love of money is the root of all evil". Yes, we must keep in mind that though Lloyd's always harboured rotters of various kinds, these were outnumbered by those who suffered from nothing worse than ignorance, and those who were most thoroughly ruined by Lloyd's were not especially greedy, and did not dream of billions.

No, they did not dream of billions, they knew nothing about the working, let alone the intricacies of Lloyd's. Come, a test. Do you know what LMX stands for? If you were asked whether solvency in terms of

the DTI is the only variation of assets available to the names, would you think that was good for you? What is Equitas, and what has it to do with the losses from Lloyd's? Do you know what London Excess of Loss means? Can you say what is meant by US third-party general liability?

Now, in those five sentences, one, and only one, is entirely gibberish, which I made up on the spur of the moment. Do you know which one is the nonsense? You don't? Then what are you doing in Lloyd's?

Some four years ago, I found myself writing roughly twice a month about Lloyd's, and the first such column began (rather like my mother putting a crumb of coal into my overcoat pocket to ward off the evil eye):

I am a loyal, even a fervent, supporter of the capitalist system, but I do sometimes wonder why it seems to be organised, led and operated exclusively by numbskulls, dunces, boobies, dingbats, rattlepates, wallies and jobbernows (to name but a few).

It is almost eerie to match what was being said about the Lloyd's catastrophe four years ago and what is being said today. Of course, most of the comment then was entirely taken up by the actual calamities, but in the breathing-space, a very pointed item reared its head, and it came from one of the groups that were trying to salvage something from the wreckage:

It is astonishing how Lloyd's lags behind the rest of the City when it comes to introducing reforms. I am afraid it is not a genuinely professional body. It is still firmly in the 1970s, while the Stock Exchange and the rest of the City is living in the 1990s. Not only have underwriters made some appalling decisions, but a system has not been in place to weed out the idiots.

Four years have passed, and still the horrors come thick and fast. Messrs Middleton and Rowland will not, I think, finish their task this week, nor for very many more weeks either. Indeed, their task is likely to become worse, rather than better, as the cries of "What about me?" become more numerous and shrill as the final curtain begins to fall. But at least these two hard-headed men (I do hope they are hard-headed — we have barrels of the other kind already) will bring at least something out of the burning. But I have just invented a new proverb: Do not fish in a sinking river, and particularly do not do so twice.

Stop Press: I have just been told that five building societies have clubbed together to go into Lloyd's. Run for your lives!

Philip Howard



■ Sport is quick, but literature lasts longer

Most men find sport far more interesting than politics, money, love, washing-up or any other activity. Yet not much literature or art is inspired by sport, because sport is for the sweaty moment, not the ages. Once you know the result, it becomes boring. This weekend's top sport is unlikely to inspire poetry or any longer-lasting fiction than already appears on the sports pages.

This was not always the case. At the dawn of literature, no epic was worth its fee unless it included funeral games by land or sea. Great sculptors portrayed discus-throwers or Graces shaking a leg for gymnastics, and the first artists in stained glass put a man holding a cricket bat (or is it a hockey stick? A golf club?) in their windows.

The *Pickwickians* had a brief innings against the All-Muggletons for Dingley Dell. And the blacksmith with the serpentine clasp to his belt had a thunderous run-up in *England, Their England*. But they were subsidiaries to the main plot. The only good novel on the pretty game is *The Cricket Match* by Hugh de Selincourt. Inchoate rugby is played in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, but that is more about hacking and the evils of training on strong drink than three-quarter tactics. The best modern literature about sport, by such as Kipling, Surtees and Masefield, concerns racing, hunting or polo, not team games in the popular sense.

Sportsmen from C.B. Fry and Ted Dexter to Sebastian Coe are always disappointments when they turn to politics. Byron may have been admired as a politician abroad, but as a cricketer only at Harrow, where they have little to admire. Politicians are never much good at sport, apart from such non-team and sedentary games as the grouse moor, the raccourse, junketing consultants or skipping a yacht. And they display their ignorance when they try to court popularity by sporting metaphor, from Baroness Thatcher's notion that it is possible to hit snies all round the wicket, to Lord Howe's misapprehension that it is a disadvantage to arrive at the wicket with a broken bat, rather than an opportunity for prolonged gamesmanship by the inspection of substitute bats brought out from the pavilion by the twelfth man.

Americans find cricketing terms sickeningly funny, from sticky wickets to straight bats and silly short-legs. But baseball metaphors, which are native to Americans who have never been near a game, are equally abhorrent to nations that don't play grown-up rounders. "He was born with two strikes against him, but I think you're way off base on that, and I hope to touch all the bases on this report. He sure threw me a curve in 'time'." And what has poor old Homer, the first sporting poet, done that baseball players find it admirable to hit him?

The fashionable political metaphor of moving the goalposts bears no relation to any sport played by man or woman, apart from Subbuteo. Goalposts can be moved at ice hockey only by an irresistible force meeting a not quite immovable object, and they are replaced at once.

The other rhetorical cliché, too, is sporting nonsense. Most playing fields are as level as the terrain allows, though Yeovil Town boasted an interesting slope that used to disconcert visitors. But since the sides change ends at half-time, any advantage is evened out. And it is not as obvious in sport as it is to politicians that there is an advantage in playing downhill. It might help the pack to work up momentum for a pushover try at Durban tomorrow. But in soccer it gives a side more control to play up a slope, so that through passes are slowed down instead of accelerated over the byline.

Politicians have no clue about the difference between a ruck and a maul, though either is a fair description of Prime Minister's Question Time: ruck in the muck, hands on the ball in a maul. Aeschylus and Socrates feature as strikers today only as the names of Latin American footballers. But the intellectuals these are named after actually played in the front row against the Medes and Persians.

Although Harold Wilson was proud that Huddersfield Town had risen from the fourth to the first division while he was Prime Minister, specialisation has generally segregated sports and politics and literature into separate stadiums, to their mutual loss.

Run of bad luck

LINFORD CHRISTIE has been barred from the London stadium named after him because of the Rugby World Cup in South Africa. The stadium has been adapted to erect a 500 sq ft television screen for rugby fans to watch the tournament, which kicked off yesterday.

So the captain of the British athletics team couldn't train at Acton's Linford Christie Stadium yesterday, and he won't be able to use it at weekends until June 24.

The stadium's name was changed from the West London Stadium after Christie won the Olympic 100 metres title in 1992. It is owned by Hammersmith and Fulham Council, which has leased it out to Rugby World Cup Promotions.

Ron Roddan, Christie's coach, said: "It is disgraceful. Linford and I went along to do some starts practice and they were building a bar across the indoor track. Linford is very annoyed. This is an athletics stadium and not a rugby ground. It's for local athletes, not London-based Aussies watching rugby." Hammersmith and Fulham Council says the booking was

taken six months ago and that an agreement was reached with Christie's club, the Thames Valley Harriers: "We very much regret any inconvenience this event has



Linford: pulled up

caused Linford. However, to be able to continue providing a free facility for him, we need to be able to take outside bookings. Without them we could not afford to keep the stadium going."

Pardon me?

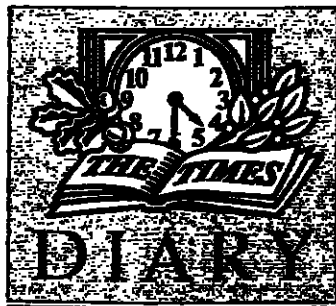
DESPITE his failing health, Lord Wilson kept his mischievous sense of humour. He was invited to address the Romanian Parliament in the 1980s by President Nicolae Ceausescu — an event of some moment for the regime.

Adopting the broad dialect of his ancestors, Wilson began: "Yorkshire born and Yorkshire bred, strong 'th'arm and weak 'th'head." Ceausescu and his comrades twiddled their earphones in despair as the translators sat open-mouthed in stunned silence.

Alarmer

THE LATEST tourist attraction to hit Sussex is an excursion best suited to Peruvian Indians. The Sussex Downs Conservation Board is promoting llama-trekking.

"We encourage horse-riding, cycling and now we want to encourage the use of llamas to the full," says Paul Tiplady, an executive



with the board. Llama-owner Jennifer Spooner has eight of the spitting beasts on stand-by. "Llamas are environmentally friendly," she says in their defence. "They have small feet with a leathery pad which doesn't cut up the ground."

High life

AS MARTIN AMIS has recently shown, literary figures can make high demands in cash advances. The octogenarian author Herbert Huncke demands not money, however, but drugs before he performs. Huncke's work has inspired the likes of Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs: he is a confessed methadone addict and he is on a lecture tour of Europe.

On Sunday in London, he refused to read from his book. The

Evening Turned Crimson, unless the organisers found him a gramme of cocaine. "It was a very unusual request which frankly we could not possibly run to," says the Lit Bureau's Christopher Bowerbank. "We sent up some large vodkas, which seemed to do the trick, and the reading went on."

● Naomi Campbell's mother Valerie was in piercing form on Wednesday night at Dior's exhibition of jewels from the *Mogul Empire* in New Bond Street, where

she came close to crippling a male model disguised as a Greek statue. She walked repeatedly over his bare feet in her stilettos before spotting that he was alive.

Own goal

DUNCAN FERGUSON, the footballer who was yesterday sentenced to three months in jail after head-butting another player on the pitch, may care to while away his time playing a new game: the fantasy football league for prisoners, in which only footballers given jail sentences can play.

His "Lags XI" would boast an impressive array of international talent: George Best (Manchester United and Northern Ireland); drink-driving and assaulting a policeman; Peter Storey (Arsenal and England); pornography and plotting to counterfeit money; Tony Adams (Arsenal and England); drink-driving; Jan Molby (Liverpool and Denmark); reckless driving; Dennis Wise (Chelsea and England); assault on taxi driver; and Eric Cantona (Manchester United and France; attacking a spectator, committed to community service).



"It's a pedal car - he doesn't need a written test"

P.H.S

مكتبة من الأصل



BACK FROM BRUSSELS

Britain's ministers should say what they want

Next week David Davis, the Foreign Office minister from the group planning the revision of Maastricht, will meet his European Union colleagues in Messina. There in 1955 the foreign ministers of the six founding members of the Common Market met to translate the federalist visions of Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman into reality. The decision to meet, 40 years later, in the same place is symbolic: next year's inter-governmental conference will, many members hope, give the federalist ideal a further boost. Mr Davis should disabuse them.

The Government is now preparing its negotiating brief for the IGC. Already the search for alliances has begun. John Major flies to Bonn today for his annual meeting with Helmut Kohl. He will offer the German Chancellor support on a range of issues dear to him — the development of Europe, a veto on further funds for the Mediterranean at the expense of Eastern Europe — in return for German restraint over the Maastricht revisions. Mr Major believes that he has already won over the Germans into vetoing any more powers for Brussels. He has also found support for the continuation of an inter-governmental framework in deciding issues such as terrorism, asylum and police co-operation. And he will make much of joint Anglo-German proposals for competitiveness and a more deregulated European Union.

Next month he will fly to Paris, for a tête-à-tête with President Chirac a day after the Paris dinner for all the EU leaders to meet the new man in the Elysée. Again, the Prime Minister will be looking for common ground — at the Cannes summit and beyond. His blandishments will be utterly different from

those offered in Bonn: the strengthening of the Western European Union, a slapping down of the European Parliament's pretensions and a determination to keep power within the Council of Ministers. He may win qualified French backing.

Britain's overall negotiating stance for the IGC, however, remains opaque, largely because of the unresolved differences within the Cabinet sub-committee drawing up the brief for the full overseas and defence policy committee. At issue is whether Britain can and should press not only to halt any further centralisation of Commission powers but also to have competences repatriated to member states that Brussels has now arrogated to itself. Euro-sceptics rightly accuse the Foreign Office of being defeatist in concluding that such a demand would be impractical and would leave Britain isolated; Douglas Hurd insists that it might still be possible to claw back some powers, though renationalising agriculture or single-market issues would be counter-productive.

The Foreign Office has refused to outline which areas of competence it thinks could practically be taken back from Brussels, and how much support Britain could win for such a demand. The suspicion must be that, in order not to alienate potential allies on the Continent, the diplomats are playing down the areas where EU responsibility should be limited. This would be a fatal negotiating mistake, as well as a move deeply unpopular within the Conservative Party and the country. Mr Davis is not going to Messina to negotiate; he should be taking a robust message that reflects politics in Britain. He should say what we want. It is up to the diplomats later to win what they can.

HOME AND WRATH

Mortgage-payers face yet another painful policy

If the Government had deliberately set out to infuriate the voters of Middle England, it could not have bettered the decision in last year's Budget to withdraw support for mortgage-payers who lose their jobs. When reminded of the inadequacy of private insurance for this purpose, the Social Security Secretary, Peter Lilley, flew into a rage on Wednesday and faxed an intemperate letter to the chairman of the Council of Mortgage Lenders. The reply, sent yesterday, is a measured but devastating indictment of Mr Lilley's policy.

All who take out new mortgages from this October and then lose their jobs through redundancy, illness or accident will no longer be able to rely on the Government to cover their mortgage payments for the first nine months of unemployment. Mr Lilley wants them instead to take out private mortgage protection policies. The trouble is that these policies are expensive, they often fail to pay out, and they cover at best half of the population.

Of all risks, unemployment is one of the hardest to cover through private insurance. It is heavily linked to the economic cycle, which means that claims tend to be bunched during recessions. Individual risks are difficult to assess because they depend as much on the economic climate as on the merits of a particular employee. The Government's own Social Security Advisory Committee confirmed last year the unsuitability of unemployment for private-sector cover.

If the policy is bad in principle, the evidence of practice is compelling. In the last recession, insurers faced many more claims than they expected and had to compensate with large increases in premiums and a tightening of the conditions for payment. The result, as a recent report commissioned by the Department of the Environment discovered, is that only a small minority of people covered by these policies managed to

squeeze payment out of the insurance companies when they lost their jobs.

And these are employees who at least qualified for cover in the first place. Few private companies would want to insure those who are self-employed, over 55, in temporary or part-time jobs, on contracts, have a chequered work record or a pre-existing health problem. Yet, once the Government withdraws help for mortgage payments, lenders will almost certainly make a mortgage protection policy a precondition for a loan. Does that mean that all these people are to be excluded from owning a home?

The new, flexible labour market will be adding to the ranks of those who will not qualify for private insurance. All over Britain are employers who are reducing the numbers of staff jobs, contracting out work, hiring part-time and temporary people and engaging consultants or freelancers. The trend is away from the traditionally low-risk borrower and towards the higher risks. At this rate, mortgage protection policies will become prohibitive.

Already they cost about £7 per £100 a month payment. So a £500-a-month mortgage will mean an extra financial burden of £420 a year for hard-pressed homeowners. That in itself could tip some borrowers into arrears. And the lack of cover is bound to lead to more repossession: just what the housing market does not need.

These conditions will apply not only to those entering the housing market for the first time. Anyone who remortgages a property from October will also be drawn into the net. That could include people who have done no more than change from a floating to a fixed-rate loan or who have borrowed a little more to improve their homes. If Mr Lilley was enraged by the Council of Mortgage Lenders this week, it is nothing to the anger that he will provoke by this policy. For too many, an Englishman's home is in danger of becoming his millstone.

TUNES OF GLORY

Music still hath charms to lead the martial breast

The Ministry of Defence's decision to close the Royal Marine Barracks in Deal and transfer the Marines' celebrated School of Music to Portsmouth brings to an end the uncertainty hanging over the barracks since the IRA bombing in 1989. The Royal Marines, admittedly, will still learn their tunes of glory in the Navy's heartland; but it will be a melancholy, long, withdrawing diminuendo after two centuries of martial music.

Five years ago, the Armed Forces still employed 2,500 musicians in more than a hundred bands, at a cost of £62 million a year — far more than the country was then spending on all its professional classical orchestras. Every regiment had its uniformed players — though not all would have graced the grandstand on a Sunday afternoon. Some were so scrappy that, as a sergeant-major once complained, "they couldn't wake a baby at ten paces". Then came Options for Change. The number of bands was trimmed from around 100 to 30. A thousand jobs were lost.

In terms of the functions and efficiency of a modern fighting machine it is hard to justify expenditure on martial music. Army musicians double as medical orderlies in time of war; as recently as 1982 casualties in the Falklands were tended by flautists and trombonists. More quaintly, other bandsmen were designated to guard key points during a nuclear attack. But the main use of the bandsmen was, and remains, to keep up

morale, for civilians and servicemen alike. The money earned as a tourist attraction by the daily ritual procession of guardsmen along the Mall must run into millions. Every year the finest bands enliven the Royal Tournament. Trooping the Colour, state visits, summits, funerals, festivals and VE-Day celebrations all depend on the frisson of men marching with their instruments to the relentless beat of the drum-major.

It is in the mesmerising effect of music that the misty origins of military bands are found. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" asks Corinthians. Trumpets were first used as a *force de frappe* during the siege of Jericho, and Nebuchadnezzar deployed cornet, flute, harp, sackbut and psaltery to frighten the citizens of Babylon.

Military bands in England are generally dated back to the attachment of a force of hautboys to the Grenadier Guards in 1678; but the skirl of the bagpipes was heard in battle north of the border many centuries earlier. Indeed, the legend of the lone piper marching into war lives on today, with the bagpipers helping victory in the Falklands.

A century ago the French made studies of marching songs to see which best improved the pace of the infantry, and concluded that 2-4 time, with the same foot always marking the beat, could make soldiers lame. Nowadays few march to music for so long; but fighting spirit will be the poorer if the music ever dies.

New EC ruling on seatbelts

From the Director of the Consumers' Association

Sir, Two weeks ago I wrote to Steven Norris, the Transport Minister, warning him that delay in forcing operators to fit seatbelts in all coaches and minibuses — those which are new and those already on the road — could have "deadly consequences" for passengers.

I have today received a fax from the office of Neil Kinnock, the European Transport Commissioner, confirming that seatbelts will be compulsory in all new coaches from next year. It goes on: "Moreover, Member States may adopt specific in-use requirements". Clearly, it is open to the UK, as it has always been, to ensure that seatbelts are fitted to all coaches and minibuses, whether we are acting unilaterally or not.

Surely there can be no argument about this now? Research shows that fitting seatbelts saves one in ten lives in accidents, and averts one in four serious injuries. The cost of fitting a belt is around £25 per seat. These figures make the argument that coach travel is X or Y times safer than this or that alternative form of travel increasingly irrelevant. The Government has declared that coaches carrying children will not have to have belts. But that is not enough. Irrespective of the particular circumstances of the dreadful crash on the M4 yesterday, we all deserve that extra chance to survive.

Yours faithfully,
SHEILA MCKECHNIE,
Director, Consumers' Association,
2 Marylebone Road, NW1,
May 24.

Airline child safety

From Mr Peter Mazzotti

Sir, Your travel correspondent's article ("Could a child survive a plane crash?" May 19) highlights the inadequacy of current regulations covering the protective restraint of children under two years old whilst travelling by air.

The UK regulations require that these infants be held on an adult's lap and restrained by a supplementary safety belt; parents of children over six months old who have paid for them to have separate seats, may bring on board their own forward-facing car-type child seats. There is no provision at all for a correct and safe infant restraining system which of necessity would require all infants to have their own rearward facing seats.

All research into the safe carriage of infants in planes and cars concludes that they must be restrained in rear-facing seats if they are to be protected to the same standard as their adult companions. The regulations for infant passengers up to 10 kg in motor vehicles requires appropriate rear-facing safety restraints.

A safety seat has been developed specifically for rearward use in aircraft and it is now possible for this age group to be adequately protected. It only needs a change in the regulations, or an independent decision by the airlines, to make this equipment readily available to the public.

Recent pressure in the US by the National Transport Safety Board will probably change the regulations there. Who is going to take a lead in Europe?

Yours faithfully,
PETER MAZZOTTI
(Technical Director),
Stowaway Developments Limited,
Meon House, Petersfield, Hampshire.

Uses of technology

From Professor Peter Day, FRs

Sir, Most people agree that the remark quoted in your leader on technology of May 17 that likens a new scientific discovery to a new-born babe was made first not by Faraday, but by Benjamin Franklin.

Furthermore, great man that he was, Faraday cannot be given the title of discoverer of electricity, but of electromagnetic induction, magneto-optical rotation, etc. etc.

A relevant remark that does appear to have been made by Faraday under similar circumstances, however, states that although he had no idea about the usefulness of a particular discovery, he had little doubt that in 50 years the Government would find a way to tax it. Perhaps that is the true context of the Technology Foresight programme.

Yours faithfully,
PETER DAY
(Director),
The Royal Institution of Great Britain,
21 Albermarle Street, W1,
May 17.

Sanctions on Iran

From the Deputy Head of Mission,
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Sir, It is bewildering that, at the end of the 20th century, at a time when the people of the world have come to detest war and bloodshed and the UN charter advocates settling differences by peaceful means, your respected newspaper should advocate military backing by the European Union of its economic sanctions against Iran (leading article, May 5).

You argue that the Americans are right to urge Russia to cancel its contract to supply Iran with nuclear

Lady Thatcher's legacy reviewed

From Mr I. A. Shapiro

Sir, It was not Lady Thatcher (letters, May 24) who refused a referendum on Maastricht and insisted on pushing through its ratification despite widespread mistrust, or judged Mr Santer "the right man for the job". It was Mr Major. The "inheritance" that shackles him is his own misjudgments, of which the latest is Nolan.

Yours truly,
I. A. SHAPIRO,
93 Oakfield Road,
Selly Park, Birmingham,
May 22.

From Mr Matthew Spry

Sir, Bruce Anderson's otherwise perceptive article of May 22 ("Time to end myth of the 'faultless premiership'") is flawed by his assertion that Margaret Thatcher's premiership restored national pride.

On the domestic front, the legacy of her period in office is an increasingly divided, overly individualistic, and often selfish nation. And as regards foreign affairs, her forays into Europe, with the contradictions between her shrill rhetoric and actual concessions, were, as Anderson notes, confused and, to my mind, quite simply embarrassing.

The "national pride" associated with the Falklands War, which returned her to power in 1983, was jingoistic and superficial. The recent conference on Britain's role in the world (reports, March 27, 29, 30, leading article March 29) merely highlighted the extent to which this country feels lost. Real, substantiated, national pride will, in my view, only be found in the

pursuit of a greater sense of fairness, equality and collective responsibility. In this sense, it will occur despite Lady Thatcher rather than because of her.

Yours faithfully,
MATTHEW SPRY,
23 Ruthin Gardens,
Cathays, Cardiff 2,
May 22.

From Mr Lewis Stretch

Sir, I was interested by your account (May 22) of Ken Clarke's counter-attack on Lady Thatcher delivered on BBC TV's *On the Record* programme last Sunday. It was intriguing to follow his switches from "we" who "had a very successful growing economy" to (in the next sentence) "they" who "relaxed it for too long" and then back to "we" who "had boom followed by bust".

Clarke is, of course, right in laying some of the blame on Lady Thatcher. She should have rumpled and sacked Lawson and Howe much earlier, and curbed both the former's "dash for growth" and their joint conspiracy to frogmarch her into the ERM.

It is a pity that our children will have to wait thirty years to discover how hard Clarke, as a senior member of her Cabinet, strove to offset their bad advice, until — like Brutus — he had no honourable alternative but to take a leading part in her political assassination.

Yours faithfully,
LEWIS STRETCH,
3 Larc Close,
Godmanchester,
Cambridgeshire,
May 22.

Drug legislation

From Dr R. W. K. Reeves

Sir, Mr Nick Eades (letter, May 19) speaks with much foresight. Within a generation, he says, half the population will be routinely breaking the drug laws.

The Government must face the fact that cannabis is now widely used by young people. Certainly it can be harmful at times, particularly to some who are vulnerable to its effects. Within the last six months two of our patients in our hospital here have become acutely psychotic after smoking cannabis. But these episodes pale into insignificance when one looks at the effect of alcohol on human behaviour. Year in and year out I record histories of prisoners charged with of-

fences of violence: time and again alcohol has played a significant part in the offending.

Heroin is a drug of early addiction. Its use leads on to much suffering, whether by infection or the destruction of the quality of life both for the abusers and the victims of crimes committed by addicts. This drug should be savagely outlawed and the resources released by the non-policing of cannabis used to enforce the law effectively.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT REEVES
(Consultant forensic psychiatrist),
Fromside Clinic,
Blackberry Hill,
Stapleton, Bristol, Avon,
May 18.

Lord Goodman

From the Warden of New College

Sir, I was sorry to see that in your interesting obituary of Lord Goodman (May 15) there was no reference to the great contribution he made to the Oxford Union Society.

Some 20 years ago, soon after assuming the Mastership of University College, Lord Goodman was invited by the Chancellor of the University of Oxford — Mr Harold Macmillan, as he then was — to become a trustee and to do all he could to support the society, which the Chancellor regarded as a bastion of Western democracy.

At that time the society was in difficulties: its finances were unsure, its membership was falling, its buildings were in serious disrepair. Lord Goodman applied all his skills to further the interests of the Oxford Union, making several substantial personal donations to it over the

years. Today its finances stand on a solid footing, its membership has dramatically and enthusiastically increased, and the Union buildings are repaired and renovated.

This sea change has been greatly assisted by the wise guidance of Lord Goodman, and his relinquishment of the Chairmanship of the Trustees on account of his deteriorating health has only been recent.

As a measure of the affection and gratitude members of the Oxford Union held for him, one of its two libraries has been named after him, and over the chimneypiece his head, sculpted in bronze, dominates the room.

The plaque below the head puts it well, describing him simply as "benefactor".

Yours faithfully,
HARVEY MCGREGOR
(Chairman, Oxford Union Trustees),
New College, Oxford,
May 19.

Housing and poverty

From Ms Robina Rafferty

and Mr Paul Goggins

Sir, Ann Abraham's letter (May 23) expresses the Citizens Advice Bureau's anxiety about the consequences of the Jobseekers Bill. We would wish to link this with current proposals for changes in housing benefit and income support. These policy reforms will have a major impact on millions of lives, yet their implications appear contradictory.

Under the provisions of the Jobseekers' Bill, low pay will not be a valid reason for refusing work. More people will be forced to take jobs with insufficient wages, which in turn will increase their dependence on family credit and housing benefit.

Meanwhile, current proposals to limit housing benefit for private tenants are intended to reduce social security spending. So too is the decision to prevent unemployed homeowners from claiming income support for mortgage interest during the first nine months of their claim. The human cost of these changes will be immense.

with widely predicted increases in indebtedness, repossessions and homelessness. They will further weaken the social security safety net for those who cannot afford private insurance cover.

The two aims are inconsistent. On the one hand a number of measures are intended to reduce spending on benefits, whilst on the other low wages and unemployment will continue to increase it. The social consequences, however, are clear: more people in poverty, increased insecurity, higher levels of homelessness and an ever more deeply divided society.

Complex issues and inter-related problems require more than piecemeal reforms. It is time for Government to act with greater compassion and coherence.

Yours faithfully,
ROBINA RAFFERTY
(Director, Catholic Housing Aid Society),
PAUL GOGGINS
(National Co-ordinator,
Church Action on Poverty),
209 Old Marylebone Road, NW1,
May 23.

reactors and a gas centrifuge system, and that the latter might be in breach of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Yet the Russians and Iran's other neighbours have no desire to create a threat to their own national security and there can therefore be no reason for them to transfer nuclear weapons technology to Iran. The centrifuge system to which you refer has never been included in the contract.

The Russians stated their opinions on the nuclear contract before and after President Clinton's recent visit to Moscow. It is the natural right of any nation to seek nuclear knowledge and technology (for peaceful purposes).

The argument that it is possible to convert nuclear technology to produce nuclear weapons does not justify its ban, in much the same way that one cannot justify banning fertilisers because they can be used to produce chemical weapons.

Yours faithfully,
MOHAMMAD SAFAEI,
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran,
16 Prince's Gate, SW7,
May 22.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Safe disposal of Brent Spar

From Professor Alasdair D. McIntyre

Sir, By occupying the Brent Spar, Greenpeace demonstrated an admirable concern for protecting the oceans, and have performed a valuable service by drawing attention to the coming need for the decommissioning of many North Sea oil platforms. However, it may be that in selecting this particular structure, which is a floating storage buoy, not a typical North Sea installation, their argument is less than secure.

Dr Rice and his colleagues in the fields of oceanographic and marine sciences (letter, May 23) give guarded approval to deep-sea disposal, but Greenpeace appears to favour disposal on land. This would involve deballasting on site, bringing the 462ft structure to the horizontal, and towing it inshore through highly sensitive shallow waters, all with attendant risk of accident.

Once ashore the many operations involved in dismantling could produce a diversity of pollution problems — terrestrial, aquatic and atmospheric. The risk to the workforce from all these operations would be considerably greater than that posed by the more straightforward deep-sea disposal.

Greenpeace is at pains to protect the sea, but in this particular instance appears to ignore the greater risk to personnel and the environment from land disposal. The Brent Spar is there and must be removed. In such a situation it is important to examine all the options and take a balanced view.

Yours faithfully,
A. D. MCINTYRE
(Chairman, Marine Forum for Environmental Issues, and
Professor of Fisheries and Oceanography,
University of Aberdeen,
63 Hamilton Place, Aberdeen,
May 23).

Battle to compete

From the President of
the Board of Trade

Sir, Predictably, your editorial of May 23, "Battle to compete", sees the principal contributor to Britain's present favourable economic circumstances as the decision to leave the ERM in 1992.

This enables you to dismiss the 70 business support measures in the competitiveness White Paper as "...worthy but will not impress".

I will acknowledge — as I did to the House yesterday — the short-term benefits of devaluation. But the benefits are temporary if the Government's first priority of stable economic management is not preserved and if supply-side competitiveness is not enhanced. This is the essential policy outlined in the White Paper.

Devaluation, for example against the German mark, has not allowed us to catch up with Germany over the last three decades. The progress we have made in the second half of this period reflects supply-side improvements.

Every major economy of which I have knowledge treats both these issues with due seriousness. It's time your newspaper noticed.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HESELTINE,
Department of Trade and Industry,
Ashdown House,
123 Victoria Street, SW1,
May 23.

Carry-on luggage

From Mr D. A. Barry

Sir, The logical and sensible solution to the problems of carry-on luggage (letters, April 19, May 9, 19) is to allow passengers to make their duty-free purchases when they arrive at their destination.

Yours faithfully,
D. A. BARRY,
2 Catherine Close,
Shrivernham,
Oxfordshire.

From Mrs Penelope Martin

Sir, Should Mrs Carlebach (letter, May 19) wish to purchase a skirt, jacket, blouse, shoes, handbag, stole, whisky, chocolates and smoked salmon "duty free" at an airport, she would do best to buy them at the airport in Istanbul where I was enchanted, last June, to see there was also a wide variety of suitcases on sale in the duty free section, presumably so that enthusiastic shoppers will still only have one piece of hand-luggage to carry on to the plane.

Yours faithfully,
PENELOPE MARTIN,
12 Willow Road, NW3,
May 19.

Cannot tell a lie

From Dr Denis Cushman

Sir, I should like to assure readers that there was no intention upon my part to deceive when I said it was not me driving the car but Sebastian Coe.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
DENIS CUSHMAN,
4 Derwent Road,
Cullercoats,
Tyne and Wear,
May 22.

OBITUARIES

EARL WALDEGRAVE

The 12th Earl Waldegrave, KG, GVO, TD, an agriculturist, landowner and farmer, died on May 23 aged 89. He was born on November 21, 1905.

EARL WALDEGRAVE, the senior Knight of the Garter, will be remembered as squire of Chewton Mendips, and as a prominent figure in the agricultural and forestry life of the South West of England. With this he combined the traditional enthusiasm for the pursuits and sports of the countryside, and a belief that the Church had an increasingly vital role to play in the changing social structure of Somerset. He fostered this belief in every way he could.

Geoffrey Noel Waldegrave was the son of a clergyman, and all through his life he loved church music. His father was rector of Stoke D'Abernon, and of Orchard-Leigh with Lullington. The succession to the title has a hint of the ramifications of *Kind Hearts and Coronets*. The rector was the uncle of the 10th Earl, who died unmarried after a lifetime of paralysis in 1933. Having been born posthumously in 1854, the rector succeeded to the earldom at the age of 78, himself succumbing less than four years later. He was 61 when his son Geoffrey was born in 1905.

The Waldegraves are an ancient family, descending from Sir Richard Waldegrave of Suffolk in the reign of Edward III. One ancestor, Sir Edward Waldegrave of West Hadon, was imprisoned in the Tower of London by Edward VI, prospered under Queen Mary, but languished in the Tower again when Queen Elizabeth I succeeded her sister. It



was to him that the Manor of Chewton, Somerset, was granted and the family have been seated there, surrounded by several thousand acres, ever since. They became barons in 1643, barons in 1685, and earls in 1729. Such is the antiquity of the family that its grant of arms is a simple "Per pale, argent and gules", and this red and white banner hung over Earl Waldegrave's Garter stall in St George's Chapel, Windsor, from 1971. The family also descends from the country's first Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole.

As an agriculturist, Lord

Waldegrave served as chairman of the Somerset Agricultural Executive Committee from 1948 to 1951 and as the Minister of Agriculture's liaison officer for Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire from 1952 to 1957. During these years he worked closely in more than one field with Anthony Hurd (later Lord Hurd, and father of the present Foreign Secretary). Hurd was then the agricultural correspondent of *The Times*, and Waldegrave made fairly frequent contributions to the paper's agricultural columns and supplements. These were sometimes anonymous.

but always reflected his practical, direct and thoughtful style.

In 1958 he became Joint Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, a post he greatly enjoyed, which fitted him well and where he was generally liked. It was, therefore, considered rather surprising when he was abruptly removed from office in Harold Macmillan's sweeping government reshuffle ("The Night of the Long Knives") of July 1962. Thereafter he served as chairman of the Forestry Commission, 1963-65.

Waldegrave was a considerable landowner, farming his own acres, creating a dairy to produce cheese and bringing into production several hundreds of hitherto derelict areas high on the Mendips. He played many varied roles in the Bath area. He was a member of the Prince's Council of the Duchy of Cornwall from 1951 to 1958. He was a director of Lloyds Bank and chairman of its Bristol regional board, chairman of the advisory committee on meat research from 1969, and president of the Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation. Other activities included being a member of the Bristol University Court (and chairman of its agricultural committee), a council member and trustee of the Bath and West and Southern Counties Agricultural Society, a trustee of Partis College, Bath, chairman of the Friends of Wells Cathedral and a governor of the Cathedral School.

He sat on Somerset County Council for 21 years, serving as a county alderman from 1948 to 1958. In 1951 he was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant, and was Vice-Lieutenant from 1955 to 1960.

As Viscount Chewton, Waldegrave

was educated at Winchester and Trinity College, Cambridge. He succeeded his father as 12th Earl Waldegrave in 1936. He served in the Royal Artillery as a major during the Second World War, and was assistant military secretary, Northern Command. In 1944 he was seconded to Washington as a member of the Civil Affairs Commission and was made an officer (1st class) of the United States Legion of Merit.

A holder of the Territorial Decoration, Waldegrave was appointed a Knight of the Garter in 1971, while serving as Lord Warden of the Stannaries and Keeper of the Privy Seal of the Duke of Cornwall, 1965-76. He was appointed GVO on his retirement in 1976.

The recent years were both stimulating and sad as Lord Waldegrave observed the burgeoning political career of his son; but latterly he fell victim to many of the problems of old age, and these dogged his domestic life and that of his family. In failing health, he was unable to take his normal place in the Garter Ceremony in June 1994.

In 1930 he married Mary Grenfell, daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Grenfell. He was the father of two sons and five daughters. Of these the youngest, William Waldegrave, became a Cabinet minister in the twilight days of Margaret Thatcher's premiership and continues to serve under John Major as Minister of Agriculture, while his elder sister, Lady Susan Hussey, has been a Woman of the Bedchamber to the Queen since 1960, and is the wife of Marmaduke Hussey, chairman of the BBC's board of governors. The earldom now passes to Viscount Chewton, who was born in 1940.

SIR JAY GOHEL

Sir Jay Gehel, CBE, national chairman of the Anglo-Asian Conservative Society, 1978-84, died on May 19 aged 79. He was born in Kathiawar State, India, on August 14, 1915.



A SUCCESSFUL businessman, Jay Gehel will be remembered chiefly for the work he did in rallying Asian voters to the Conservative cause. He worked closely with Margaret Thatcher in her Finchley constituency, becoming a warm friend as well as a great admirer of hers. Indeed, the former Prime Minister once wryly recalled his telling her: "We Asians are the original Conservatives because for thousands of years we have believed in free enterprise, freedom of the individual, private education and hard work — and you have just stolen our philosophy."

Settling permanently in Britain only in the 1960s, Gehel — who had earlier enjoyed a distinguished legal and government career in Bombay — lost no time in seeking to cut the umbilical cord that had traditionally tied voters from his own subcontinent to the Labour Party.

He himself believed that this attachment was the consequence of the part the Atlee Government had played in Indian independence in 1947; but he felt that, as a tie of sentiment, it was thoroughly out-of-date and was determined to break it. The result of his efforts was to be seen in the number of victories the Conservatives won in marginal seats with a sizeable proportion of Asian voters in both 1979 and 1983.

His work was recognised by his being appointed CBE in 1984 and by his being made a knight in 1989. A frequent attendee at Conservative Party conferences, he consistently refused to allow himself to be

confined to race relations topics; he spoke on issues ranging from the future of Rhodesia through the British economy to trade union reform.

Jayantsinhji Gehel was educated at schools in India and Britain, where he first arrived in the 1930s. He was called to the Bar by the Middle Temple in 1941 but went back to Bombay after the war to practise law. Selected for the Indian Administrative Service after independence, he was briefly a political adviser to Pandit Nehru. He went on to be appointed to the International Commission for Supervision and Control of French Indo-China, later becoming a judge and a member of the state council in Bombay.

He returned to Britain towards the end of the 1960s in order to join forces with the Kenyan businessman, M. P. Shah. He was a founder director of the Meghraj Bank as well as of the 12 subsidiary companies of that group. Active in charity work, he took pride in his association with the Duke of Edinburgh's Youth Training Scheme and in his support of the Save the Children Fund and its president, the Princess Royal.

He leaves his widow and two sons.

CHRISTOPHER HODDER-WILLIAMS

Christopher Hodder-Williams, writer and composer, died on May 15 aged 68. He was born on August 25, 1926.



A MAVERICK, Christopher Hodder-Williams had been by turns publisher, pilot, composer of music and songs, jazz pianist and sound-engineer. But he eventually made his deepest impression as a writer of science fiction — or, as he always preferred to call it, "fiction science".

John Christopher Hodder-Williams was educated at Eton, where he liked to claim he taught the "bests" the follies of regimentation. In 1944, at the age of 18, he was called up into the Royal Signals and stayed in the Army until 1948. He then tried working in the firm of which his father Ralph was chairman, the (then) publishers Hodder and Stoughton. But this did not suit him, so he went to Africa where he worked principally in films, though doing a little flying on the side. Most of the 1950s was taken up by musical work on Broadway, by piano-playing in various bands and by composing songs for theatre revues and for ITV.

Then in 1958 Hodder-Williams tried a "straight" thriller, *The Cummings Report*, which he published with Hodder under the pseudonym of James Brodin. In the following year he began his science-fiction career with *Chain Reaction*. This, one of the first novels to deal with the nuclear menace, hinged on a mystery plot concerned with radiation sickness spread by means of food. It was well received.

Most of Hodder-Williams's fiction — after *The Main Experiment* (1964) it was all SF — is marked by three leading themes: alteration of personality, bureaucratic tyranny and — though not computers

directly — the idiosyncrasy of the (most usually, both) of those who feed information into them. In *Fistful of Digits* (1968) self-engineering computers run riot; in *The Silent Voice* (1977) human brains receive radio waves to devastatingly sinister effect. *Coward's Paradise* (1974), a book which well conveys its author's sense of menace and almost hysteria, is concerned with labotomisation, which, although it was beginning to be abandoned, was still then quite a common operation.

The best of his fiction — possibly to be found in *The Higher They Fly* (1963) — is based on his experiences as an aviator, and was turned by him into a gripping television play. His more speculative work was always interesting, but perhaps too often marred by poor characterisation. His final work yet to appear, a novel, *Schizorama*, is said to have been a vigorous attack on the present-day system of "care in the community", particularly for schizophrenics.

Hodder-Williams was twice married. His second wife, Deirdre, who helped to keep him going through a long series of debilitating illnesses, survives him with a son and a daughter.

ROBERT FLEMYNG

Robert Flemyng, OBE, MC, actor, died on May 22 aged 83. He was born on January 3, 1912.



William Mervyn, left, Cecil Trouncer, centre, and Flemyng, right, in *The Guinea Pig*, Criterion Theatre, 1946

AN URBANE, good-looking actor of gentle charm combined, nevertheless, with a certain decisiveness, Robert Flemyng established himself on stage in the years immediately before and after the war in a variety of modern plays. The classics, or plays of the socially and politically motivated English dramatists of the 1950s and 1960s, were never really his *métier*, but he was particularly effective in the work of Terence Rattigan, for whose essential decency his acting style and the figure he cut on stage seemed to be tailor-made.

Yet he was no stranger to comedy. His timing was impeccable and he had the quality, so cherished by dramatists, of uttering the mildest joke with an air of entire spontaneity and belief. But, though he had served his apprenticeship running the gamut of rep fare, once he reached London in July 1935 he did hardly any classical work, although he did have a season with John Gielgud in New York.

The Second World War was soon to interrupt his career. He himself rendered distinguished service in the Royal Army Medical Corps and was able to return to the London stage afterwards to consolidate a stage reputation that was to stand at its highest, perhaps, over the next ten years. In films, he could always be guaranteed to give a distinctive quality to what might, in the hands of others,

have been simply forgettable actor roles.

Robert Flemyng, the son of a Liverpool doctor, went to school at Haileybury, and was for a short time a medical student before going on to the stage. In 1932 he was fortunate to return to Liverpool for three

years with William Armstrong's Playhouse Company, an experience that prepared him for a London career and work in New York. Thereafter on the London stage he had a variety of roles in routine period fare characterised by his Lord Lynyates in *When the*

Bough Breaks at the Criterion in June 1936. But it was his *Kit*, one of the young students in Rattigan's *French Without Tears*, a role he created at the Criterion in November 1936, which announced him as a talent of distinction. He was to play the

part for 16 months. In December 1938 he made his first New York appearance as Tony Fox Collier in *Sprung Meeting*.

In 1939 Flemyng joined the RAMC. Soon commissioned, he was to serve throughout the war, rising to the rank of colonel. He was awarded the MC in Eritrea in 1941 and was later mentioned in dispatches and appointed OBE (Military), for the part he played during operations in Italy in the winter of 1944.

On demobilisation he reappeared on the stage, at the Marigny, Paris, in October 1945 as Lord Harpenden in Rattigan's *While the Sun Shines*. In December of that year he scored a great success at the Grand, Brompton, in Warren Cheatham Strode's *The Guinea Pig*, as Nigel Lorraine, the young public school master who befriends a working-class boy who wins a scholarship to a public school. This went on to have a years' run at the Criterion and

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PERSONAL COLUMN

RENTALS

W. G. GOSWAMI, 17, St. John's Road, London, E.C.1. Tel: 01-477 4316.

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TICKETS FOR SALE

EXPRESS TICKETS: London, E.C.1. Tel: 01-477 4316.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEWS

Nato ready to strike Serbs again

NATO warplanes are poised to carry out more raids against the Bosnian Serbs today, after destroying two ammunition stores with a strike deep in their heartland.

An ultimatum for Serb and government troops to surrender their heavy weapons or remove them from the exclusion zone around Sarajevo will expire at noon local time (11am BST). "We are stressing that there is the possibility of more action like today's," a UN spokesman said. Pages 1, 13

South Africa celebrates dream victory

South Africans were jubilant as the Springboks trounced Australia, the reigning world champions, by 27 points to 18 in the opening match of the Rugby World Cup. Not even the arrival of democracy a year ago could match the pleasure in the faces of all races on the nation's streets. Pages 1, 48

Euro-policy agreed

A "tough but positive" approach to next year's conference on the future of Europe, in which Britain will seek to build alliances to limit the powers of Brussels over some policies, was agreed by Cabinet ministers. Page 1

How over shares

Restrictions on executive share options are being prepared after the Prime Minister was forced to defend electricity executives who have transferred shares into their wives' names. Pages 1, 5

Clinton anger

President Clinton signalled his growing impatience with the IRA by publicly calling on it to "take the next step and begin to discuss the serious decommissioning of weapons." Page 2

Death choice

A university graduate paralysed from the neck down after a birthday prank allowed himself to die to spare his family. Page 3

Boy 'heard' crash

A boy scanning the airwaves on his radio receiver heard the last moments of the commuter aircraft that crashed in a Yorkshire field, killing 12 people. Page 4

Brains return

The "brain drain" operated in reverse as Oxford University announced the appointment of two senior academics previously lost to the United States. Page 6

Man descended from 'African Adam'

An "African Adam" was probably the common ancestor to all mankind, according to fresh evidence from an American team investigating chromosomes. Their study strengthens the belief that all modern humans are descended from about 10,000 African ancestors who lived between 100,000 and 200,000 years ago. Page 1

Sentencing plea

Senior legal figures, including the Lord Chief Justice, are pressing for a change in the law to end the secrecy over how long murderers should stay in jail. Page 8

Car theft drive

A police intelligence unit has been formed to fight the gangs that are stealing luxury cars to order for buyers in Japan and the Middle East. Page 12

Forbes ambition

Malcolm Forbes Jr, the billionaire American publisher, is considering financing his own bid for the Republican party's presidential nomination in 1996. Page 13

Babe Ruth mystery

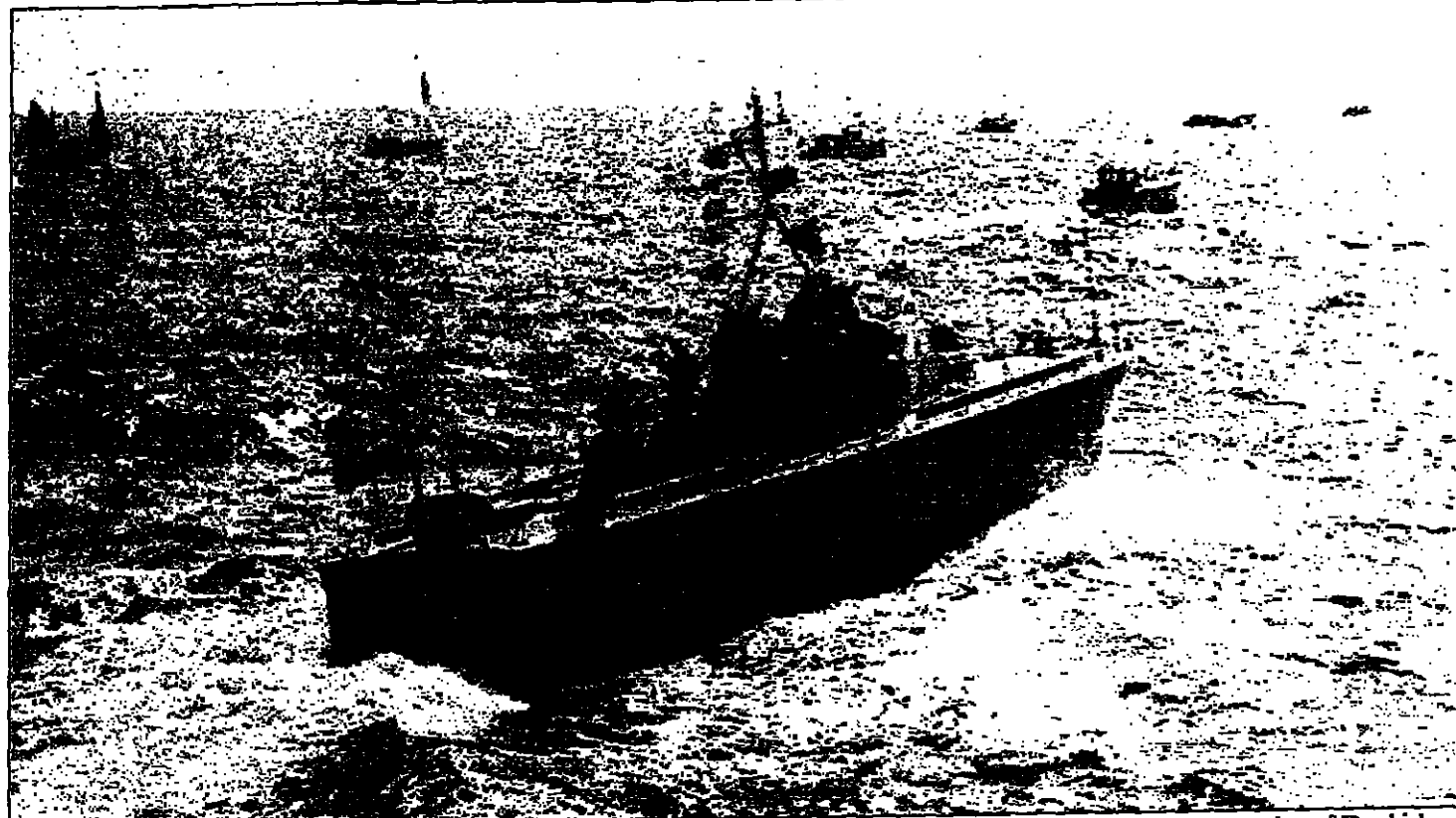
For the third time in 70 years the pinstriped uniform worn by the legendary baseball player, Babe Ruth, has been stolen, adding yet another bizarre chapter to a tale of mystery, robbery and murder. Page 16

Slave railway

Slave labour is again being used to construct a railway in Burma, according to an opposition group fighting the country's hardline military regime. Page 16

Peace hope

America hailed Syria's concession over the Golan Heights as a breakthrough in the Middle East peace process. But the agreement over security did not deal with core issues. Page 17



Little ships in the Channel sail once again for France — to mark the 55th anniversary of Operation Dynamo, the evacuation of Dunkirk

BUSINESS

Mortgage row: The Government is trying to diffuse a row with British mortgage lenders over DSS plans to cut support payments to homeowners who fall ill or lose their jobs. Page 25

British Gas: Difficulties over the introduction of discounts for customers who pay their gas bills by direct debit fuelled complaints about British Gas to the gas industry regulator. Page 25

Economy: Factory gate prices may be stabilising, reinforcing the view that there is little likelihood of an imminent rate rise. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 0.9 to 3,328.3. Sterling's index was unchanged at 84.9 after a rise from \$1.5740 to \$1.6023 and a fall from DM2.2650 to DM2.2504. Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: West Indies won the first Texaco Trophy one-day international by five wickets as England gave a reminder of their inability to play consistently to their potential. Page 44

Football: Paul Ince, the Manchester United midfielder player, has withdrawn from England's team for the Umbro Cup because he is "emotionally drained." Page 42

Motor racing: Jean Alesi led Michael Schumacher by 0.4sec after the first day's practice for the Monaco Grand Prix. Gerhard Berger and Damon Hill were next. Page 46

Golf: Volvo is to continue its backing of the PGA European Tour for a further four years from 1996 at a cost of £20 million. The sponsorship began in 1988. Page 46

ARTS

Jackson's single: A unashamedly autobiographical plea for understanding is the basis of Michael Jackson's *Scream*. Page 33

Davies goes south: At the Cannes Festival, the premiere of *The Neon Bible* marked a new departure for director Terence Davies, who has turned from his Liverpool roots to a story from the Deep South of America. Page 32

An American in London: The American conductor Leonard Slatkin demonstrated his understanding of English music in a fine Festival Hall concert. Page 32

Pop on Friday: Caitlin Moran on the summer festivals; Davis Sinclair on Teenage Fanclub's new album; and the rise of Chuck Prophet. Pages 33, 34

FEATURES

Artistic vision: What does it take to be the director of the Victoria & Albert? Dr Alan Charles Nelson Borg, CBE, FSA, shares his plans with Joanna Pitman. Page 18

Soaring achievement: If danger is one of the things that inspires a climber, it is something different for the husband on the ground. Giles Coren meets Jim Ballard, who looks up to the wife who climbed Everest. Page 19

INFOTECH
The vision thing: Real life has finally caught up with science fiction. After a delay of at least 30 years, it is now possible to buy something that closely resembles a true video telephone. Pages 35-40

THE PAPERS
President Boris Yeltsin will take his place for the final day of the G7 summit in Halifax, Canada. Until he can provide evidence that he is determined to stabilise his country's economy and has no plans to revive the Soviet Empire, the West should hang onto its money. — *The European*

High in the skies over India, two doctor-passengers successfully operated on a passenger's collapsed lung — using a knife, fork and a coathanger. Frightening and crude but that's inflight medicine these days — barebones supplies and sawbones luck. — *USA Today*

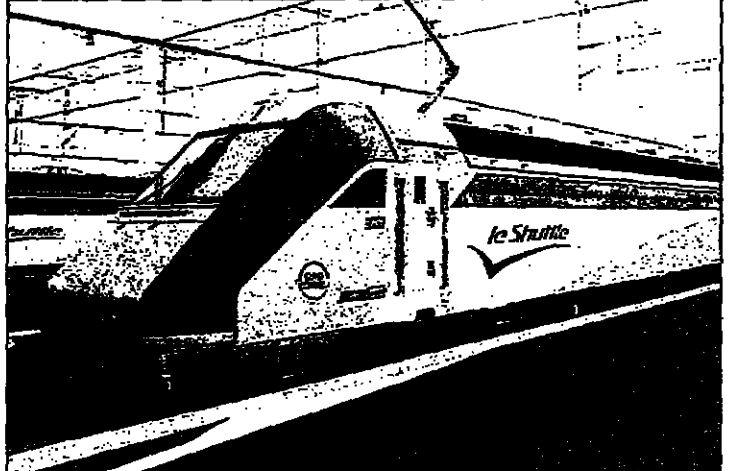
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

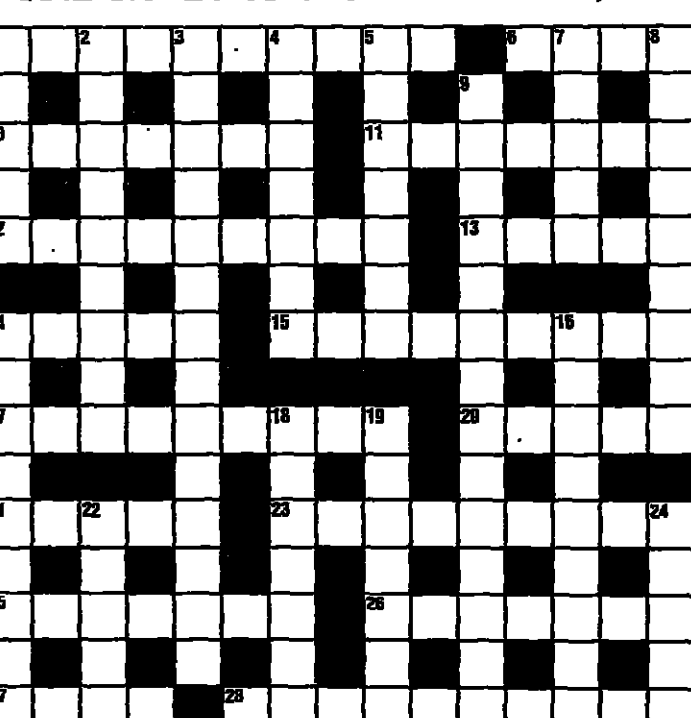
SHUTTLE SAVERS
Channel Tunnel discounts for cars — and up to £100 worth of free petrol

REVIEWS

Anthony Holden on Philip Norman's novel of good and bad times on Fleet Street



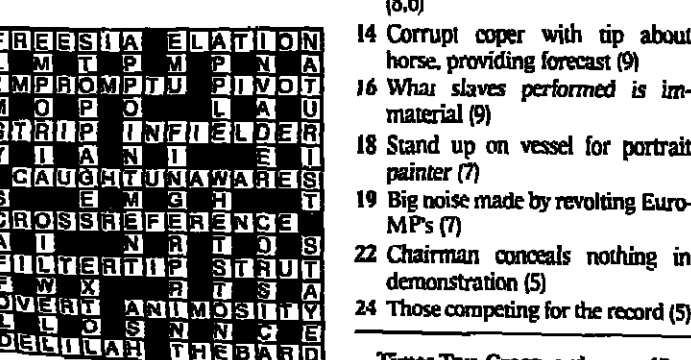
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,865



ACROSS

- Gymnast may use this transport route across river (10)
- Deceiver abandoning daughter and wife in Europe (4)
- Profit out of a manuscript put back in pipeline (3,4)
- Not 'tut in this form of combat' (7)
- Rack that's provided for case when travelling (9)
- Private accommodation used by monarch (5)
- Lose bottle in the grass (5)
- Where you'll find quiet, with only sea and island resort (9)
- Some cricket at test ground for top people (9)
- Taking part in special air-drop, he's landed in Scotland (5)
- Ancient city where physician loses crates, finally (5)

Solution to Puzzle No 19,864



Times Two Crossword, page 48

FOR THE LATEST REGION BY REGION FORECAST, 24 HOURS A DAY, DIAL 0800 1500 FOLLOWED BY THE APPROPRIATE CODE.

Region	Forecast
Greater London	701
East of London	702
West of London	703
South East	704
South West	705
West Midlands	706
East Midlands	707
North East	708
North West	709
Yorkshire & the Humber	710
East of England	711
West of England	712
South East	713
South West	714
West Midlands	715
East Midlands	716
North East	717
North West	718
Yorkshire & the Humber	719
East of England	720
West of England	721
South East	722
South West	723
West Midlands	724
East Midlands	725
North East	726
North West	727
Yorkshire & the Humber	728
East of England	729
West of England	730
South East	731
South West	732
West Midlands	733
East Midlands	734
North East	735
North West	736
Yorkshire & the Humber	737
East of England	738
West of England	739
South East	740
South West	741
West Midlands	742
East Midlands	743
North East	744
North West	745
Yorkshire & the Humber	746
East of England	747
West of England	748
South East	749
South West	750
West Midlands	751
East Midlands	752
North East	753
North West	754
Yorkshire & the Humber	755
East of England	756
West of England	757
South East	758
South West	759
West Midlands	760
East Midlands	761
North East	762
North West	763
Yorkshire & the Humber	764
East of England	765
West of England	766
South East	767
South West	768
West Midlands	769
East Midlands	770
North East	771
North West	772
Yorkshire & the Humber	773
East of England	774
West of England	775
South East	776
South West	777
West Midlands	778
East Midlands	779
North East	780
North West	781
Yorkshire & the Humber	782
East of England	783
West of England	784
South East	785
South West	786
West Midlands	787
East Midlands	788
North East	789
North West	790
Yorkshire & the Humber	791
East of England	792
West of England	793
South East	794
South West	795
West Midlands	796
East Midlands	797
North East	798
North West	799
Yorkshire & the Humber	800

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic/roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0300 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, roadworks

Area within A25

Essex/Herts/Beds/Bucks/Berks/Oxon

Road/Surrey/Sussex/Hants

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Wiltshire

Devon

Wales

Midlands

East Anglia

North West

North East

Scotland

Northern Ireland

AA Roadwatch is charged at 30p per minute (cheap rate) and 40p per minute at all other times.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Wednesday's highest day temp: Marham, Norfolk, 22°C; lowest day temp: Far Isle, Shetland, 0°C (48°F). Highest rainfall: Aughton, Lancashire, 0.5in. Highest sunshine: Avonmouth, Highland, 12.9h.

FLIGHT SAVERS

LONDON TO FLORENCE
from £149 return.

LONDON TO AMSTERDAM*
from £79 return.

LONDON TO NEWCASTLE
from £70 return.

Phone Air UK on 0345 566777 or contact your travel agent. For travel after 14th July, all major credit cards accepted. Period of applicability varies. Restrictions apply. Subject to Airport Tax.

FORECAST

General: England and Wales will start bright and it should be sunny for some time over eastern England. It will cloud over from the west during the day and rain will move into western districts later.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will be bright at first with showers. More persistent rain will spread from the west across many areas during the afternoon and evening. It will be quite warm in the brighter areas, but chilly and breezy in the rain.

London, Central S, SE, E England, E Anglia, E Midlands: sunny start but cloudy later with a chance of showers. Wind southerly moderate. Max 18°C (64°F).

W Midlands, NW England, Lake District, Central N, SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll: sunny at first with isolated showers. Becoming cloudy, rain in evening. Wind southerly moderate.

AROUND BRITAIN

Area	Forecast
London	701
East of London	702
West of London	703
South East	704
South West	705
West Midlands	706
East Midlands	707
North East	708
North West	709
Yorkshire & the Humber	710
East of England	711
West of England	712
South East	713
South West	714
West Midlands	715
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North East	717
North West	718
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South East	722
South West	723
West Midlands	724
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West of England	793
South East	794
South West	795
West Midlands	796
East Midlands	797
North East	798
North West	799
Yorkshire & the Humber	800

ABROAD

Area	Forecast
London	701
East of London	702
West of London	703
South East	704
South West	705
West Midlands	706
East Midlands	707
North East	708
North West	709
Yorkshire & the Humber	710
East of England	711
West of England	712
South East	713
South West	714
West Midlands	715
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East Midlands	797
North East	798
North West	799
Yorkshire & the Humber	800

FORECAST



ARTS 32-34

Just how good is Michael Jackson's new single?



INFOTECH 35-40

Can a computer make a better cup of coffee?



SPORT 41-48

Hill left hot and bothered on the streets of Monaco

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
Pages 46, 47

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY MAY 26 1995

Home lenders put Lilley on defensive

By Robert Miller and James Landale

THE Government was last night trying to defuse a row with Britain's mortgage lenders, after infuriating them over proposed cuts in income support payments.

The argument centres on controversial plans by the Department of Social Security to cut the level of benefit payments to homeowners who lose their jobs or are too ill to keep up their mortgage repayments.

A meeting yesterday between Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security and the Council of Mortgage Lenders to discuss the Government's plans was described as "useful and constructive" by both sides.

Nevertheless, the CML vowed to continue its campaign to persuade the minister to either abandon his proposed cuts or to provide a more secure safety net to homeowners who fall on hard times. If this fails, mortgage lenders warn that repossession will inevitably rise.

The DSS proposes that from October all new borrowers will have to wait for nine months to qualify for state

help. Existing homeowners and people officially listed as "carers" will qualify for income support payments after two months. However, homeowners who move or even re-mortgage their property after October will automatically be re-classified as new borrowers for DSS purposes.

On Wednesday Mr Lilley, who insists that private mortgage protection policies will fill the gap caused by the DSS cuts, added further fuel to the acrimonious debate when he

Lilley attack... 29

released the text of a personal letter to Christopher Sharp, chairman of the CML. In this he launched a personal attack on Adrian Coles, the CML's Director-General.

Mr Lilley accused Mr Coles of making ill-judged remarks about the proposed DSS cuts which were, said the minister, incorrect.

The CML said that independent research from the Association of British Insurers and the Department of the Environ-

ment prove that millions of homeowners, such as the self-employed and those with medical conditions, will be excluded from such cover.

After the meeting, Mr Coles said: "We have not changed our position. If the Government goes ahead we will have to make the best of a bad job and work to minimise the effects of repossession. This debate is about real people living in real homes with real problems. The DSS policy will damage the housing market."

Mr Lilley said: "The CML has reassured me that it recognises the urgent need to encourage new kinds of insurance products to provide protection from October that many homeowners lack at present. I very much welcome this move forward."

He added that the Government had been actively discussing new products with the insurance industry and a number of big companies were "well advanced" in setting up new policies. "We are determined to address the current situation, which is leading to 50,000 homes a year being repossessed, and where 70 per cent of borrowers effectively have no protection when they get into short term difficulty."

Social Security officials said that the CML was beginning to bow to the inevitable.

The Halifax, Britain's largest lender, deplored the personal nature of Mr Lilley's attack on Mr Coles and added that, given the short time between now and October, it was not clear whether new-style policies would be ready in time. "The DSS move will not save much money, if any, and it is a further indication that the Government is moving away from the concept of owner occupation," it said.

Trade committee calls for merger of OFT and MMC

By Ross Tieman, Industrial Correspondent

A CROSS-PARTY Commons committee is calling for urgent reform of Britain's fair trading laws to improve consumer protection and provide clearer guidelines for companies.

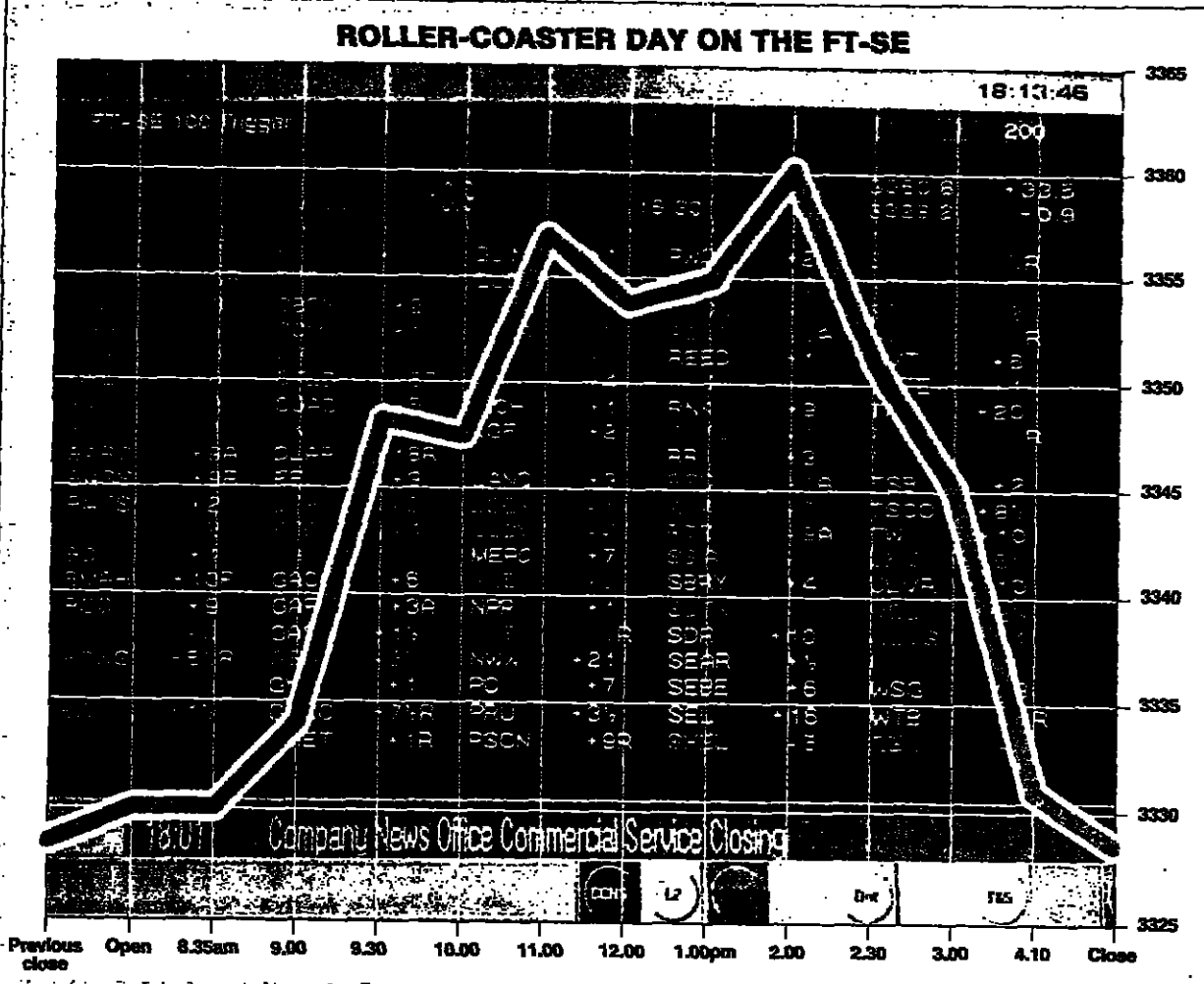
The Office of Fair Trading and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission should be merged into a single competition authority staffed by full-time experts, the Trade and Industry Select Committee said.

At the same time, Britain is urged to adopt a European-style legal framework, under which anti-competitive practices are outlawed and punishable with heavy fines. At present, any allegation of anti-competitive practice has to be investigated on a case-by-case basis.

The unanimous report, produced by a committee with a Conservative majority under a Labour chairman, will add to demands for reform of the British competition regime, increasingly out of step with practice elsewhere in Europe.

The proposals endorse and develop the views of Sir Bryan Carsberg, former Director-General of Fair Trading, who has just resigned to run the International Accounting Standards Committee. Richard Cator, committee chairman, said: "Once we got digging,

Pennington, page 27



Strong early gains in London yesterday were all but wiped out at the close by a sell-off in New York

Dow acts as spoiler for London

ATTEMPTS to resume the bull run were short-lived as dealers in London endured a roller-coaster day. Leading equities gave back almost all of an early 33.5-point rise after a negative start to trading in New York prompted a late sell-off in London (Philip Pangalos writes).

The FT-SE 100 index had surged to a new intra-day high of 3360.8 for 1995 at lunchtime, but fears that the US may be slipping back into recession hit the dollar and put the skids under US Treasuries and shares.

The FT-SE 100 ended up 0.9 at 3328.2. The Dow Jones industrial average saw an early 40-point fall as investors took profits after the recent strong run.

Stock markets, page 28

MPs recommend a new watchdog for Lloyd's

By Colin Narbrough

LOYD'S system of self-regulation must be replaced by an independent authority to restore confidence in the insurance market, according to a key Commons committee.

A damning report from the cross-party Treasury and Civil Service Select Committee yesterday called for legislation to switch responsibility to an independent body.

The committee said that Lloyd's regulation system was "fundamentally and irretrievably tarnished" and agreed with claims by names that the market's losses of more than £8 billion in five years were partly due to poor regulation. On Tuesday, Lloyd's offered

names £2.8 billion in compensation, in exchange for their dropping litigation against their agents.

Michael Deeny, chairman of the Lloyds Names Committee, said his committee backed the MPs' criticism of self-regulation, which had been an "abysmal failure". This was demonstrated by the fact that Lloyd's still permitted reinsurance of reinsurance, the spiral syndicate system that lost names close to £3 billion.

Lloyd's said it would work with any new regulatory regime. If Parliament wished to introduce legislation and noted that Lloyd's had imple-

mented changes in governance in 1993.

The Select Committee said, however, that without external regulation, the introduction of corporate capital to Lloyd's, intended to secure its future, would be in doubt.

Lloyd's rejected the MPs' allegations of concealment over asbestosis claims and failure to initiate an enquiry. It said the chairman of Lloyd's regulatory board, had received documents containing the allegations in April and had instructed Freshfields, its legal adviser, to carry out a thorough investigation to see whether an inquiry was needed.

'Outlook more encouraging than at any time this year'

Factory gate price rises ease

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

FACTORY gate prices are stabilising, new evidence from the Confederation of British Industry suggests today, reinforcing the view that there is little immediate likelihood of an imminent rise in interest rates.

Though the CBI's latest monthly industrial survey shows order books strengthening, the rate of output growth is falling back and the confederation's latest economic forecast, also published today, suggests overall growth in the economy is set to slow.

Growing City belief that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, was right to maintain interest rates at their current level in spite of pressure from the Bank of England for a rate rise is likely to be given support by the CBI. Its survey of almost 1,300 companies, accounting

for half of the UK's total manufactured exports, shows that manufacturers' price rises are continuing to ease, reducing pressure on inflation and so demand for a further rise in base rates.

The balance of companies reporting price rises — those registering a rise set against those recording a fall — stood roughly steady in May at 19 per cent after a balance of 18 per cent in April. This was sharply down from the figures of 31 and 27 per cent in the previous two months.

Kate Barker, CBI chief economic adviser, says the survey, which follows news of a slight slowdown in economic growth in the first quarter of this year, suggests the next rise in base rates, currently 6.75 per cent, could be "de-

layed a little". Sudhir Junankar, CBI associate economic analysis director, said "the outlook for factory gate price inflation is now more encouraging than at any time this year," with competitive pressures still strong in both UK and overseas markets.

Overall demand continues to improve, the survey shows, with the balance of companies reporting rising order books, up from 8 to 10 per cent, and, at 17 per cent, export order books are with the exception of last month at their highest since April 1977. But the pace of output growth seems to be slowing, the figures suggest.

However, the rate of increase in raw material prices is still enough to persuade the CBI in its latest economic forecast to up its inflation

estimate and that rates will have to go up by a further percentage point next year.

The CBI forecasts that headline inflation will rise to 3.9 per cent by the fourth quarter of this year, falling back to 3 per cent by the end of 1996. But a one-point rise in rates will, the CBI says, bring underlying inflation down to close to 2.5 per cent.

A tightening labour market is forecast to push earnings growth up to 4.4 per cent, though the CBI says that unemployment will drop to 2.1 million this year and will then fall through the two million threshold next year to end the year at 1.9 million.

Overall growth is put by the CBI at 3 per cent a year over the next two years, compared with almost 4 per cent in 1994.

British Gas complaints and cut-offs increase

By Ross Tieman

COMPLAINTS about British Gas to the industry regulator, Ofgas, rose last year by 26 per cent to a record 2,318. Almost a fifth of protests were triggered by the introduction of discounts for customers who pay by direct debit, which took effect on January 1.

The number of customers disconnected for non-payment of bills rose to 16,393, reversing a downward trend of several years.

The surge in discontent with British Gas, the monopoly supplier to more than 18 million homes in England, Wales and Scotland, took place as the company launched a fundamental restructuring to prepare itself for the introduction of

competition in the household market.

Almost a quarter of complaints came from customers in the company's North Thames region. Just three regions, North Thames, South Eastern and North West accounted for half of all complaints.

Bills were easily the most common cause of complaints, accounting for almost a third of the total. Tariffs, standing charges and services were also common causes of discontent.

In her annual report, Clare Spottiswoode, the Director-General of Ofgas, said that she was disappointed by the trend of disconnections. Discussions continued on improving disconnection procedures.

Work is also under way on a new price control formula to take effect in

1997. Ofgas is to seek outside views on whether to change the formula that caps prices charged by British Gas's Public Gas Supply arm and TransCo pipeline subsidiary.

Ms Spottiswoode said consultation documents would look at whether using an inflation-linked formula to cap prices still "provides an effective balance between the control of prices and the encouragement of corporate efficiency, or whether it needs to be reinforced or replaced."

The report shows the rapid inroads made by rival suppliers into British Gas's share of the business market. During 1994, independent suppliers increased their share of the market above 2,500 therms from 35 per cent to 52 per cent.

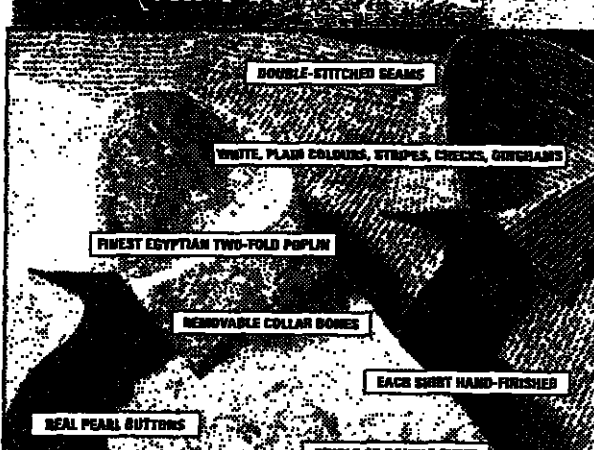
British Gas's combination of cus-

tomers discontent and sliding market share is expected to heighten shareholder anger over big pay rises for its directors, led by Cedric Brown, the chief executive.

More than 6,000 shareholders have indicated their intention to attend the company's annual meeting next Wednesday, forcing British Gas to move it from the Barbican Centre to the larger London Arena so as to accommodate the crowd.

The board faces a touch-and-go battle over Resolution 13 — a call from Pirc, a shareholder watchdog group, for the company to abandon its new directors' remuneration scheme. Pirc claims to have support from leading institutions for its demand that the company revise the scheme in line with best practice.

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Lord Young makes a promise over C&W

BY ERIC REGULY

LORD YOUNG of Graffham, chairman of Cable and Wireless, said he was disappointed with the company's results, but promised a return to profit growth as Mercury Communications finishes its costly restructuring and new ventures pick up momentum.

Separately, Lord Young hinted that C&W is vulnerable to a takeover. "I suspect that our assets are worth more than our share price," he said.

Analysts said that bid speculation has been creeping into the shares. British Telecom and AT&T, America's largest overseas phone carrier, have been mentioned as potential suitors because of their global ambitions and deep pockets. *Amber News*, a newsletter by C&W Financial Analysts, said "the company's days of independence could be numbered".

Lord Young said that he has not been approached by a potential bidder. Any suitor,

he said, would have to weigh the risks of controlling Hong Kong Telecom, the single biggest business in C&W, once Hong Kong comes under China's control in 1997.

C&W reported pre-tax profits of £844 million in the year to March 31, down 22.4 per cent from the previous year, largely because of one-off charges related to Mercury. Earnings per share fell from 23.6p to 11.5p. A 6.22p final dividend, due on September 1, makes 9.05p, up 9.7 per cent.

Lord Young said that the profits were not encouraging even if exceptional charges are excluded. "We are not making any excuses — this is a disappointing result, and one we do not intend to repeat," he said.

Pre-tax profits excluding the exceptional charges rose by 5 per cent, to £1.14 billion, or 23.6p per share, unchanged from the year before. Overall turnover climbed by 9.2 per cent, to £5.13 billion.

Hong Kong Telecom, owned 57.5 per cent by C&W, again dominated group results, with operating profit up 10 per cent, to £810 million. Growth in Caribbean operations was strong.

Mercury, whose operating profit declined by 17 per cent, to £203 million, was the biggest drag on earnings. C&W took a £122 million charge for Mercury's restructuring, which includes losing 2,500 jobs, and wrote off £178 million in goodwill related to the acquisition of Telephone Rentals, the phone systems installer bought for £319 million in 1988 to expand Mercury's client base.

James Ross, C&W chief executive, said that Mercury's restructuring is ahead of schedule and predicted that the worst was over. "It's a one-year hiccup," he said.

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James Ross, left, and Lord Young saw Cable and Wireless profits hit by Mercury charges

GRE to end direct sales to public

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

GUARDIAN Royal Exchange is to stop selling life insurance and pensions direct to the public by axing its 256-strong direct sales division. It said that selling policies this way was no longer profitable and that it wanted to concentrate on increasing sales via independent financial advisers.

As well as severing links with 178 self-employed staff and cutting agreements

with 78 tied agents, Guardian plans to make 220 support staff redundant this year.

David Meldrum, managing director of Guardian Financial Services, said: "Policies written through direct sales consultants and appointed reps are not producing an adequate profit contribution and are unlikely to do so."

Guardian, like other life insurance companies, has

been hit by a sharp downturn in sales because of depression in the housing market, which has hit sales of endowment policies, and bad publicity about personal pensions. The company said that new business had fallen by about 20 per cent last year.

Other financial services companies have switched to paying salespeople by salary instead of commission.

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Scepticism greets gilt strips proposal

BY COLIN NARBROUGH

THE Government plans to introduce gilt "strips", which separate interest on a bond from principal payments, as part of its campaign to make the gilt market more efficient and lower the cost of borrowing to the taxpayer.

Anthony Nelson, presenting a consultative document from the Bank of England on the strips market, yesterday said that the Government was paying a "good margin" above what was paid by Germany and America and that the measures proposed could bring savings that run into "billions" (of pounds).

However, analysts said that the likely savings from the measures, which the Government does not expect to have in place until the middle of next year, would not add up to billions very quickly.

Strips arise from separating a standard coupon bond into its interest and principal payments, so that they can be held separately or traded as zero-coupon instruments. Cash flows from the strips would be identical to the cash flow from the unstripped bond, assuming no tax distortion. The Inland Revenue proposed sweeping reforms that would allow all returns on gilts and bonds to be taxed as income. This would remove 150 pages from tax rules and eliminate obstacles to the creation of a strips market.

Mr Nelson said that the changes would benefit investors, who could build the portfolios they wanted, rather than being constrained by issuance policy. Pensioners and policy holders would benefit, as their investing institutions could directly match their future outgoings with risk-free liabilities, and taxpayers would benefit as gilts would be more attractive to investors, reducing yields and hence debt interest costs.

A flourishing strips market operates in America. Some European countries also use the instrument.

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Amerindo fined £25,000 by Imro

A BRITISH affiliate company of Amerindo Advisers Inc, a large US investment adviser, was yesterday fined £25,000 by Imro, the regulator for fund managers, after being found guilty of four serious rule breaches. Amerindo was also ordered to pay £16,000 in costs. Imro said that over a period of three years up to November last year Amerindo had failed to keep an adequate programme of its compliance work. The company failed to give specific consent to an employee to deal on margin in stocks in which it had dealt for clients.

Imro also said Amerindo had failed to keep adequate financial resources available. In one instance it had a shortfall of £45,000 and in another it had "a financial resources deficit of £138,000". Imro, which has fined four members a total of £120,000 so far this year with £60,000 in costs, also found that Amerindo had not provided the regulator with the proper information on deals conducted by its staff on or about August 15 last year.

US computer merger

THE restructuring of the computer industry in America continues with the proposed takeover of Legent, a software supplier, by Computer Associates International (CA) in a deal worth more than \$1.75 billion. CA will soon begin a tender offer for Legent worth \$47.95 a share. Both companies have approved the merger. Legent had 1994 revenues of about \$500 million. CA said a portion of the funds to be used in the acquisition will come from a \$2 billion credit facility underwritten by Credit Suisse. Legent's stock advanced to \$45 from \$31.25 after the merger was announced.

Barclays staff warned

BARCLAYS BANK'S 60,000 employees yesterday received letters from the bank warning that they would be in breach of contract if they strike next Tuesday. Such a breach of contract could lead the bank to take measures that could involve dismissal, they were told. However, the bank said that it did not currently have any plans to dismiss any staff who went on strike. The industrial action was called by Unifi, the union representing more than 40,000 Barclays staff, over pay. The union is calling for a 5 per cent increase while Barclays has imposed a 2.75 per cent rise.

Metro revenue rises

A HEALTHY rise in advertising revenue helped Metro Radio Group, the Newcastle radio station operator, to advance pre-tax profits 24 per cent to £2.05 million in the six months to March 31. Turnover rose by 16 per cent to £11.7 million. John Joseph, managing director, said advertising revenues continue to grow strongly, while the latest RAJAR figures show that Metro's stations have 42.7 per cent of all radio listening in the North East. The interim dividend rises to 2.75p (2.25p), payable on July 10, from earnings ahead 23 per cent to 7.95p (6.45p) a share. Metro shares firmed 2p to 46p.

Bristol Post ahead

THE Bristol Evening Post, the publisher of newspapers in the West on England, said a 9 per cent increase in advertising revenue had arisen principally in the employment sector. Yesterday the company reported a rise in taxable profits to £7.6 million in the year to the end of March from £5.1 million in the previous 12 months. Earnings were 19.65p a share, compared with 12.98p. The total dividend is lifted to 12.75p a share from 12.25p, with an 8.25p final due July 24. The company is in talks with HTV, the ITV broadcaster in Wales and the West of England, to establish joint media ventures.

A&H pegs dividend

ACATOS & HUTCHESON, the edible oils company, is maintaining the interim dividend at 3.5p a share after a decline in pre-tax profits to £4 million from £5.6 million in the half year to April 2. The downturn reflects competitive pressures and the costs of acquisitions and rationalisation and was anticipated by the board at the company's annual meeting in February. The shares, however, fell a further 11p to 234p. Net cash balances at April 2 were £16 million, bolstered by a share subscription in November. Earnings were 6.6p a share, falling from 11.4p previously.

Plea for tax amnesty

INDIVIDUAL taxpayers should be allowed a tax amnesty to get their affairs up to date ahead of the move to self-assessment, the President of the Chartered Institute of Taxation argued yesterday. In his inaugural address, Gerry Hart said that an amnesty would be "a one-off opportunity... to allow taxpayers to regularise their affairs prior to the introduction of self-assessment with its inbuilt stringent penalties", and should boost payments to the Revenue. Mr Hart said that, under self-assessment, tax advisers' fees should be tax-deductible up to 1 per cent of taxable income.

Forward Group offer

FORWARD GROUP, the specialist electronics and chemicals company, is raising £7.5 million through a share placing and open offer to part-fund the acquisition of Exacca, one of Britain's biggest manufacturers of printed circuit boards. Forward is paying £13.5 million, with a further profit-related payment of £2.5 million. New shares are being offered at 270p. Forward's pre-tax profits rose to £3.7 million for the year ended January 31 from £2 million last time. A final dividend of 3.5p a share, due July 3, makes a total 6p (5p).

Morland beer sales up

SALES of Old Speckled Hen beer rose sharply to give Morland, the Abingdon, Oxfordshire, brewery, a boost in the half-year to March 31. Pre-tax profits rose to £4.7 million from £4 million and earnings to 14.8p a share from 12.8p. The interim dividend rises to 3.37p a share from 3.06p, payable on July 14. The shares rose 12p to 482p. The company said sales of Old Speckled Hen rose 30 per cent. Total draught beer sales rose 8.3 per cent in a declining market and turnover improved to £29.5 million from £26.6 million.

Shorts joins with Lockheed Martin to sell missile

BY ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

LOCKHEED MARTIN, the world's biggest defence contractor, is to work with Shorts of Belfast in an effort to sell Short's Starstreak air defence missile to the US Army.

The collaboration will promote Starstreak as an air-to-air missile for use on America's 800 Apache attack helicopters. The missile has already been made a mandatory requirement for the three consortia bidding to supply Britain with a new attack helicopter.

Adoption of Starstreak by the US could provide more than £1 billion of work for Shorts Defence Systems, a 50/50 joint venture between Shorts, owned by Bombardier of Canada, and Thomson CSF of France.

The collaboration with Lockheed was announced by Roy McNulty, president of Shorts, at a conference in Washington called by President Clinton to promote investment and trade between Northern Ireland and the US in support of the peace process.

Mr McNulty said that selection of Starstreak by US forces "would create a significant number of new jobs in Northern Ireland and be of major benefit to the Northern Ireland economy at a crucial time".

It would also help to remedy an imbalance in trade in weapons between Britain and America. Shorts and Lockheed are already collaborating in the bid by Westland, the Yeovil heli-

copter company, to supply the Apache, designed by McDonnell Douglas of America, to Britain's Ministry of Defence. If Apache is selected, Shorts would assemble the Lockheed Hellfire anti-armour missiles that would equip the aircraft in a contract potentially worth £600 million.

Under the new agreement, any Starstreak missiles purchased by America would be assembled by Lockheed Martin Electronics at its plant in Troy, Alabama. Kits of parts would be supplied from Shorts's modern £400 million plant in West Belfast, where a staff of 500 is employed.

By announcing the extension in their alliance now, the partners clearly hope to highlight the ability of the US Administration to use its buying power to support the Northern Ireland economy.

The link is also confirmation of the laser-guided Starstreak's good export prospects. It can be launched from helicopters, ships, light vehicles or even the shoulder of a soldier, delivering three armour-piercing explosive darts at a speed no aircraft can escape.

Aérospatiale, the French aircraft, missiles and satellites group, has also held talks with Shorts about fitting Starstreak to the Franco-German Tiger helicopter.

Pennington, page 27

Li Ka-shing targets naval base

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT



Li: property shares boost

LI KA-SHING, the Hong Kong entrepreneur said to be the crown colony's richest man, has revealed that he is interested in bidding for the former HMS Tamar, the old Royal Navy base in the heart of the territory's business district.

The Royal Navy pulled out of the base at the end of last year and has concentrated its remaining operations at Stonecutters Island, where it maintains three patrol craft. A successful bid by Mr Li for Tamar, which forms part of the central reclamation area, would tighten his grip on Hong Kong Island, where he

is also planning redevelopment of the old Hilton Hotel site.

Mr Li, speaking after the annual meeting of Cheung Kong, his main property company, said his corporate stable was interested in bidding for the Tamar site. He could not say whether it would be alone or with partners. Last week, he said his group would be in the bidding for the central airport rail terminal site.

The confidence Mr Li's purchase has indicated about buying of prime sites in the run-up to the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 helped to boost prop-

erty stocks on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

China's People's Liberation Army has reserved part of the Tamar base, currently owned by the Hong Kong Government, for its own use after the handback. The waterfront property comprises a small dockyard, workshops and a large office building.

Mr Li said recent comments by Lu Ping, Director of China's Office of Hong Kong and Macau Affairs, that land leases after could be longer than 50 years should boost local confidence in property.

Sweet and sour, page 29



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□ Bond market faces new revolution □ Helicopter contest links defence hopefuls □ Clear away the mergers morass

Brave new gilt-stripping world

TO MOST non-professionals, one element stands out from the arcane proposals of the Inland Revenue and the Bank of England for the gilt-edged and bond markets. Capital gains on gilt-edged would no longer be tax-free. That concession, and the later one for corporate bonds, were made precisely to help finance government deficits and to stimulate the markets. Now, the argument is that abolishing the relief will do the same.

Sceptics will smell a rat. But the tax changes would be the key to the biggest reform of the gilt-edged market since the 1986 Big Bang. The tax proposals stem from attempts to satisfy the changing needs of big international investors, pension funds and insurance companies. They are now much readier to buy fixed interest securities for reasons varying from lower inflation to the changes in pension fund law now dragging through Parliament. The Bank of England, which has been too conservative in the past, is right to respond. It can only allow a much wider variety of instruments to emerge if the tax distinction between income and capital gains is removed — and with it a clogging mass of anti-avoidance rules.

That revolution could save money for taxpayers, make debt issue a more feasible option for

big companies and boost market turnover in the City of London. There are drawbacks too. The new tax regime will not be entirely simple. It must allow inflation relief for indexed-linked stocks, as on equities, though not on conventional gilt-edged. Where capital gains become income and losses are deductible. Special rules will be needed to protect private investors.

The proposals require fewer, more homogeneous issues of government bonds. So the gilt-edged market will gradually desert the small investor. That will, however, reflect the realities of the past thirty years and may matter little. There are now tax-free instruments for investing modest sums in bonds.

The Bank's paper on *Strips and New Instruments in the Gilt-edged market* opens the way for a more dangerous world as well as a more efficient one. Gilt-edged and corporate bonds could be carved up into separate bits representing each instalment of interest due and the principal, now all converted into "zero-coupon strips". That allows big investors to tailor the securi-

ties they buy closely to their needs, a clear plus for pension funds for instance. In effect, they can design their own gilt-edged stocks. Such single-purpose securities have shown their appeal in split-capital investment trusts. They should work for corporations. But turning solid safe-looking investments into zingy, exciting securities would also make many of them more risky and interest-rate sensitive. Such "complex" securities caused havoc among American investors who thought a safe borrower meant low risk. Such reforms need great care, but the direction is surely right.

Wheels within whirlybirds

MICHAEL Heseltine's decision to override the Monopolies Commission's recommendations in respect of the GEC/Bae battle for control of VSEL, maker of the Trident submarine, has interesting implications. If Heseltine had gone along with the MMC's majority verdict that GEC should be blocked, the odds



against an amalgam of GEC and Bae would have lengthened. Instead, they have shortened.

Lord Weinstock's preferred option has always been an amalgam of GEC and Bae's defence interests. Historically, he was deterred by unquantified exposure to leases in Bae's civil aerospace operations. These have now been capped, and the regional aircraft are about to be tied into a European consortium. The City is convinced that further consolidation of the UK's defence industry is inevitable.

As it happens, neither Bae nor GEC have rushed to revive VSEL hostilities. Both parties, courtesy of the Takeover Panel, have three weeks to put up or shut up.

While this little skirmish warms up, GEC, Bae and GKN, new-found parent of Westland, are shouting each other down ahead of the UK's £2 billion attack helicopter order. Westland is fronting the Apache, the US army's main attack helicopter manufactured by McDonnell Douglas. Bae represents the Tiger, under development by the Franco-German Eurocopter group, while GEC has linked up with Bell Helicopters to offer the Venom, a yet to be developed version of the Cobra. GKN has taken heart from Wednesday's decision by the Dutch Air Force to proceed with a £720 million order for 30 AH-64D Apache armed helicopters. But behind the lobbyists' smokescreen, it is apparent that Tiger has closed the Apache's early lead and is now neck-and-neck.

In the event of a Tiger victory, Bae would become a 20 per cent partner in the Tiger programme. Westland would be invited to undertake the assembly, as a sub-contractor. That could open the way for both Bae and Westland/GKN to forge equity

links with Eurocopter. Who better than Lord Weinstock, the doyen of Euro-mergers, to complete the deal?

Ensuring open competition

UNTIL recently, the idea of a Single Competition Authority was a hazy pipe dream, conjured up by the outgoing Director-General of the Office of Fair Trading. Now, however, the suggestion is gaining momentum and yesterday it received the backing of the Trade and Industry Select Committee.

There is little question that present competition policy in Britain is in a mess. Mergers and markets are examined in private by the OFT, which chooses a selection to be passed up to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. At any stage the Trade Secretary or the European Commission can put their oar in and overturn the whole complex process. This is bureaucracy at its very finest.

The chance to clear away lumps of this paper-churning

machinery and replace it with a single body should be grabbed with both hands and there is a good chance that the present or a future government may agree. A competition authority could look at all potential cases and decide which of them need a full inspection by its commissioners. The Trade Secretary would retain his ultimate veto, which Mr Heseltine used so effectively in the VSEL bid this week.

There is one potential pitfall in the process of simplifying Britain's competition machinery. Currently, the MMC is fully accountable to the public. The commission holds formal hearings where the parties involved can be legally represented. Its weighty reports contain full written evidence from the participants. The OFT, by contrast, operates behind closed doors and rarely publishes more than a brief summary of its reasons for its actions. Any new competition authority should meet the higher standards of public accountability and not be able to conceal any of its embarrassing blunders or compromises. Indeed, the new authority could go one step further and hold full public hearings in merger inquiries, just as the select committee that recommends it has to operate in public. Open government need not be sacrificed on the altar of efficiency.



Toast to the new boys: Geoffrey Maddrell, chairman, left, and Peter Darbyshire, managing director, yesterday

Profit rise slows at South West

By ERIC REGULY

SOUTH West Water, whose prices are the subject of a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry, disappointed investors yesterday with a relatively small rise in profits and dividends.

The shares rose 5p, to 527p, but most of the other privatised water companies posted stronger gains.

South West's pre-tax profit rose 6 per cent to £98.7 million in the year to the end of March. Earnings, excluding a £35.5 million restructuring charge, rose 5 per cent to 71.8p a share. After the charge, which relates chiefly to redundancies and property writedowns, earnings were 43.7p. Turnover was up 14 per cent to £286.2 million.

Ken Hill, finance director, said profits and turnover increased because of a larger customer base and a high "K"

factor, which allows water companies to raise their prices at a certain percentage above the inflation rate.

South West raised its prices by 12.4 per cent in 1994/95. The increase this year falls to 4.5 per cent. Mr Hill said the profits are unlikely to increase substantially this year because of the lower K factor and higher interest charges. Unlike some water companies, South West was in no position to offer a special dividend.

A final dividend of 18.2p will be paid on September 1, making a total 27.3p, up 7 per cent over last year. North West Water set the pace earlier this week with a 10.75 per cent dividend increase, excluding a special dividend of 3.8p.

South West will learn the outcome of the MMC inquiry on June 28, three months later than it expected.

Gestetner hit by Canadian loss

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

SHARES in Gestetner, the office equipment group, yesterday plunged 34p to 69p after the company said that it faced a major trading loss in Canada of £14 million and that it would have to make a £15 million provision to overhaul operations there.

The company said it had only just become aware of the size of the problems, which have cut pre-tax profit expectations for this financial year from £25 million to £9.5 million. It said that key executives are going to Canada to tackle problems involving businesses that Gestetner bought in the early 1990s and that it is uncertain how long it will take to restructure the operations.

Gestetner would not confirm that managers in Canada are likely to pay for the trading slide with their jobs.

The company's quickly expanding Canadian operations made a £1 million profit last year. The problems reported yesterday arise from the final stage of rationalisation of the businesses, which involved consolidation of management integration systems. The company said that serious operational difficulties had occurred in the first quarter of this year because of problems with integration of inventory control and rental equipment management. The severity of the situation seen so far led it to forecast that a loss of £14 million would result by the end of the year.

Canadian sales volumes are 20 per cent below 1994 levels. Of the £15 million provision, half is allotted to projects and half to go on write-downs.

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PowerGen surges beyond forecasts

By MARTIN WALLER

POWERGEN, the smaller of the two electricity generators, has cast doubt on the attempt by rival National Power, to sue the Government over the bungled share sale last spring.

Ed Wallis, PowerGen's chief executive, said that his company had taken its own legal advice. "We concluded we had no case whatsoever."

John Baker, his counterpart at National Power, said this month that he was considering legal action against the Treasury over the plunge in his company's share price after the intervention of Stephen Littlechild, the industry regulator.

Professor Littlechild sent all electricity share prices tumbling when he announced his intention to go back on an earlier regulatory review of the 12 regional distributors in England and Wales just as the shares were being marketed, and Mr Baker said the Treasury's failure to warn the

market beforehand could be the basis of legal action. But Mr Wallis commented: "I think somebody was flying a kite — I don't think they ever intended to take the Government to court. It's all a bit of a storm in a tea-cup."

PowerGen was announcing pre-tax profits for the year to the end of March that were ahead of market expectations, not least because the company took advantage of the distortions of its other main competitor, Nuclear Electric, in January and February.

Nuclear suffered technical problems at three of its power plants during those months of high demand, and PowerGen capitalised on this by selling to those customers affected. Mr Wallis said: "One of the dogs has fallen over — you drop your prices and you dash in there and grab his bone."

Pre-tax profits rose from £476 million to £545 million, £30 million greater than some

estimates. PowerGen is paying a final dividend of 10p a share, as indicated in the Government share sale, raising the total to 15p, covered 3.3 times by earnings of 49.6p, while forecasting that this cover will reduce further, to 2.5 to 2.7 times, over the next two years. The group ended the year with gearing of just 10 per cent of shareholders' funds, in spite of investing £400 million and spending £330 million buying some shares back, but with the benefit of a cut of almost £300 million in the value of coal held in stock.

PowerGen shares rose 2p to 495p. The part-paid shares were up 2p, to 203p. The windfall from National Nuclear customers enabled the company to slow the rate at which it was losing market share to other generators. Its share dropped 0.2 percentage points to 25.9 per cent.

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MacDonald finds malt goes better with Coke

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

WHISKY connoisseurs may recoil at the latest trend in Italy to drink a malt with Coke, but MacDonald Martin, parent company of the Glenmorangie single malt, is not complaining after seeing a jump in profits on the back of revitalised interest in malt.

Increased malt drinking, along with the marketing of premium versions of Glenmorangie, the UK's second largest-selling malt, helped boost pre-tax profits 15 per cent to £5.71 million on turnover which increased 20 per cent to £35.37 million.

MacDonald Martin, yesterday reported on a year during which Geoffrey Maddrell took over as chairman and Neil McKerron, managing director, left. Sales of Glenmorangie 18 per cent internationally and 33 per cent in the UK.

Although MacDonald Martin achieved an increase in all international markets except Asia, where overstocking in Japan was to blame for a £500,000 sales fall, the UK showed the most marked improvement with sales rising from £16.9 million in 1994 to £21.2 million last year.

Own label/buyers' own brand sales of malt whisky were strong, showing an improvement of 140 per cent against a general market increase of 17 per cent. The distiller performed less convincingly in blended own-label sales, suffering a decline of 25 per cent while the market moved up 4 per cent.

Product marketing is a key part of MacDonald Martin's strategy and in February it appointed Peter Darbyshire managing director. Mr Darbyshire, who came from Drumblair, where he was managing director, has built a career promoting whisky.

Earnings per share rose 12 per cent with the A shares at 21.49p and the B shares at 13.74p. The dividend rises 10 per cent to 8.15p for the A shares and 4.07p for the B shares and is payable on July 28. The A share price rose 22p to 67.5p while the B shares were unchanged at 88.3p.

Storehouse counter-attack

By CARL MORTSHED

A CONFIDENT Storehouse is spending £100 million on new Bhs and Mothercare stores, creating at least 1,000 new jobs. This follows a two-point surge in margins at the retailing group, which has sent operating profits climbing 32 per cent to £87.6 million.

Keith Edelman, group chief executive said that gross margins were up by a full percentage point and sales 5 per cent on a 52-week comparison. At the pre-tax level profits were up 46 per cent to £91 million, boosted by last year's exceptional loss. Mr Edelman described the results as encouraging in a tough and competitive market. "The consumer has been bashed on the head," he said. "They are very shy of spending more money."

Storehouse changed its strategy at Bhs halfway through the year in a drive to raise profitability by reducing



Edelman: hard times

markdowns and tightening the rules on its Choice card loyalty scheme. The push for profits gained Bhs an extra 1.5 points of gross margin but at the expense of sales at the Bhs chain, which only improved by 3 per cent on a 52-week comparison with 1 per cent from new space.

At Mothercare, profits were

up by more than two-thirds thanks to new store formats which gave a big boost in children's clothing sales, leading to 7 per cent sales growth at existing stores. Operating margins at Mothercare rose by two points to 5.6 per cent and Mr Edelman expects to gain another when Mothercare's distribution goes to the automated distribution centre at Atherstone.

Tight control of costs — profit-related pay means that Storehouse is not funding a higher fixed wage bill — left the group with £75 million in the bank at the year end and Mr Edelman expects to close the current financial year with net cash even after funding the £100 million store opening programme. Storehouse is paying a full-year dividend of 6.3p, up 15 per cent and the payout is covered 2.4 times by earnings.

Tempus, page 28



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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Bad eggs in the City

YESTERDAY will go down in City folk lore as the day the Gulls took their revenge. The great and the good had gathered at the Skinner's Hall in their hundreds for a highlight of the City Season — the annual Gulls' Eggs City Luncheon. "It's like something out of *Brideshead*," somebody remarked, adding, "Of course, one only eats gulls eggs until Ascot." The guests included Cazenove, Credit Suisse Asset Management, Schroders and De Beers — plus a Field Marshal, a Marchioness, a Major General and a fair sprinkling of Lords. Gulls eggs are an acquired taste, and at Savoy Grill they cost £3 each. The eggs arrived safely enough, were hard boiled and the celery salt was at the ready. Then disaster struck. Every single gulls egg was found to be bad! But the City didn't let the gulls get away with it. After a quick shopping trip, 50 dozen quails eggs were served and the event, sponsored by Baines Gwinnett, raised £30,000 for that worthy charity, Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund.

THERE are Lloyd's names, and there are names. Offering, in interior or layout speak, to make "your wildest dreams come true", is The Reckless Design Company of Worthing, run by one James Reckless.

Home fixture

THE world's richest man, the Sultan of Brunei, has bought New Zealand's most expensive house. The price tag on Waimanu, a mansion in the Auckland suburb of Home Bay, was £293 million. But the cash doesn't go to a New Zealand. The house was sold by Scottish millionaire David Murray, owner of Glasgow Rangers Football Club.



"Here - run me off a few copies of this"

Happy hours

AN INSIDER'S view of Scotch whisky investment is offered tomorrow by 38 distilleries who are to open their doors to the public. They will be unravelling some of the mysteries and myths of their craft, with many giving tutored whisky tastings. Speyside Co-operative at Craigellachie is giving the opportunity to be a cooper for the public. Fund managers may enjoy entering a bonded warehouse, not usually permitted. For those who like a bargain, several are giving a 10 per cent discount, including Blair Athol, Cardhu, Glenkinchie, Lagavulin, and Taliskier.

The last word

THE winner of Allied Domecq's competition to find F words for its Firkin pub chain and submitted via the City Diary is Alan Livesey, computer audit manager at Bolder Hamlyn, the chartered accountants. His entry "Flyover & Firkin in Hammersmith" wins him six bottles of Beefeater gin and six bottles of Ballantine's Finest whisky. There were numerous entries, for which Allied Domecq says "thank you". A bottle of Ballantine's Finest is also on its way to every entrant in the next week or so.

COLIN CAMPBELL



War of words: in a letter to the chairman of the CML, Peter Lilley, left, claims that Adrian Coles "distorted" the facts about income support

Lilley finds little support for his attack on the home front

Mortgage lenders side with the CML in battle with minister, writes Robert Miller

There are few worse industry figures who Peter Lilley could have chosen to publicly attack than the mild-mannered Adrian Coles, Director-General of the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML). Mr Lilley, Social Security Secretary, has been stung by the almost universal criticism levelled at his plans to introduce drastic cuts in the level of income support payments for homeowners who are made redundant or become too ill to work and has launched a furious attack on Mr Coles. The attack was contained in a letter of complaint from Mr Lilley to Christopher Sharp, chairman of the CML.

Mr Lilley released the text of his letter on Wednesday in spite of an informal agreement made the day before between the CML and officials of the Department of Social Security that neither side would make any public comment before their scheduled meeting yesterday. Mr Lilley's letter was faxed to the CML without any covering note of explanation. Nor was the CML informed until much later in the day that the minister's letter had also been passed on to selected newspapers.

Mr Coles' crime, in the minister's eyes, appears to have been to reflect the concerns of his members, who represent the £350 billion mortgage industry. Specifically, Mr Coles has been trying to point out to Mr Lilley, and the Government in general, the potentially dire consequences that the cuts in income support will have on an already fragile housing market. The CML is convinced that private-sector mortgage protection policies will not provide a sufficient safety net for homeowners who are made redundant or who are too ill to work; repossessions will inevitably rise above the current 1,000 or so a week.

From October, new borrowers, including those who re-mortgage their properties, will have to wait up to nine months for any state help in meeting monthly mortgage repayments. Mr

Lilley insists that mortgage protection policies will fill the gap. What appears to have particularly irked the minister is the use the CML has made of an independent survey, published by the Department of the Environment last week. The Housing Research Report, compiled for the DoE by the University of Loughborough and Policy Studies Institute, concluded that up to 50 per cent of Britain's ten million homeowners would not be covered by mortgage protection policies. Furthermore, the survey said, even those who have taken out such

people resort to distortions, he has simply succeeded in discrediting himself, and blackening the previously high reputation of the building society movement. In his reply to Mr Lilley yesterday Mr Sharp, who is also chief executive of Northern Rock Building Society, gave unequivocal support to the CML's Director-General. He even waded into the minister with fresh evidence. As well as using the DoE report to support his argument against the Government's proposed income support, Mr Sharp produced new data from the Association of British Insurers (ABI). Quoting from the ABI's *Risk, Insurance and Welfare* report, Mr Sharp said: "Firstly, the researchers state the conditions for a risk to become insurable. They conclude: 'Few of these conditions ever hold with respect to unemployment.'"

In examining current insurance policies available, the view of researchers is: "There are severe limitations on the cover that is commercially available at affordable cost... The net result is to exclude many of those whose circumstances result from the trend towards a more flexible labour market... for those most at risk the cost of private insurance to provide a secure income during unemployment continues to be prohibitive." It adds: "Some families will stand to gain little or no financial benefit from their private insurance premiums."

Mr Sharp concluded his letter to Mr Lilley by saying that he was unable to confirm to the minister that Mr Coles' remarks were "not correct. Rather, the CML Director-General has my full

support in drawing attention to the severe disadvantages of the Government's policy on income support for mortgage insurance."

There has been enormous support for Mr Coles personally and for the CML's line from its members. The Halifax Building Society, Britain's biggest lender with 1.5 million borrowers, said: "Adrian Coles is spelling out the position of lenders in general and it seems a great pity that such an important issue is being marred by personal attacks. Our concern is that the Government has changed its policy in the belief that the private sector will fill the gap without the knowledge that it in fact will do so. Our grave worry is that time available before October when the income support cuts take effect is so short that the range and depth of policies that is required for the situation will not be available."

The Woolwich, the third largest building society, said: "A system which results in an accumulation of nine months worth of arrears before any benefit is paid is bound to cause serious arrears. Ultimately, repossessions will rise. It appears the Government is pulling the rug from under our feet."

Nick Raynsford, the shadow housing minister, said that by releasing his letter Mr Lilley had broken the code of political consensus agreed by all parties to mark the death of former Prime Minister Harold Wilson on Wednesday. He added: "Peter Lilley appears to have ignored the cross-party agreement to mark the death of Lord Wilson and instead chosen to make a highly personalised attack on the much-respected Adrian Coles."

With the Government working on an increasingly narrow majority, mortgage lenders will find it hard to force a U-turn in the DSS policy on income support cuts. But if Mr Lilley persists in personalising his attacks on Mr Coles he could find that he is forced into making concessions. That at least will provide a crumb of comfort for millions of beleaguered homeowners.

'The Government is pulling the rug from under us'

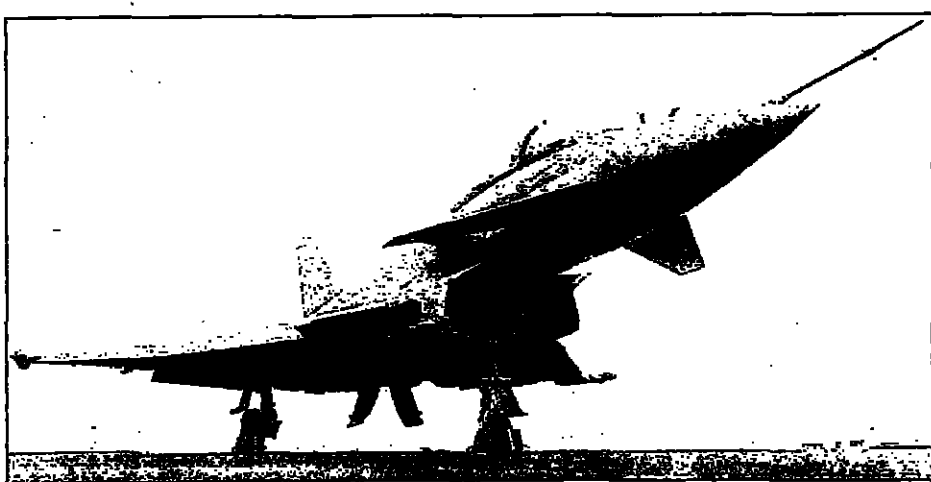
Roger Freeman answers critics of MoD procurement policy

Getting value for money in defence

On Wednesday the National Audit Office published its 1994 Major Projects Report. In *The Times*, of that day, "Forces compromised by MoD failings", you attribute to the NAO a statement, which says: "A catalogue of incompetence and error by the Ministry of Defence has jeopardised Britain's capacity to defend itself."

However, the NAO found that overall, the 25 projects studied were likely to cost £1.68 billion less than originally forecast, but that if Eurofighter 2000 and Trident, the biggest two projects, were excluded, there was a net forecast increase of £645 million. Much of this increase was due to over-optimistic initial cost estimates, (made before the department introduced a more sophisticated costing system) and much to the higher rates of inflation in defence during the period than in the economy as a whole.

The management of defence equipment projects lies at the heart of our procurement business. The most challenging projects are unlike almost anything found in the civil sector. The sheer scale, £15 billion on Eurofighter and £11.6 billion on the Trident programme, the imperative to achieve a technological edge; the unparalleled range of harsh environments in which we expect our equipment to operate; the many potential military threats to it; and the life or death importance of reliability and robustness, combine to create projects of formidable technological complexity and to stretch development time-scales over many years. The NAO report needs to be



Take off: the £15 billion Eurofighter programme had a cost overrun of £1.29 billion

seen in the wider context of the improvement of defence procurement over the past decade. Many of the projects covered by the 1994 Major Projects Report were first approved in the early 1980s, or earlier, with estimates and contractual arrangements that predate many of the reforms that have transformed defence procurement over the past decade. It is just not possible, or sensible, to start again with a blank piece of paper. We do not continue with any project unless it represents good value for money.

The ministry has adopted sophisticated risk-assessment and management techniques sometimes before the private sector. We have already gained improved reliability and maintainability by the use of specialist managers and tight contractual conditions and expect substantial savings over the lifetime of new equipment. For example, the tough reliability and maintainability provisions for the Challenger 2

mean that 259 of these tanks would provide more capability than more than 400 Challenger 1s, saving £40 million per year on operating costs. More generally, in concert with industry, we have thoroughly overhauled our contract procedures, reducing the burden on the ministry and industry.

It is not just a matter of procurement and contracting methods. We need the right people too. Where necessary, we strengthen our project teams with an infusion of technical expertise from industry. Our management organisation and processes are designed to achieve the closest liaison and understanding between those who procure equipment, those who will maintain and support it and, most importantly, those who will actually use it.

The MoD has a very good story to tell if one gets beneath the headlines. On Eurofighter, for example, the largest report-

ed "cost overrun" of £1.29 billion against the estimate of the original project cost, £232 million is attributed to internal changes in MoD accounting rules which do not increase what is actually spent. The balance includes increases due to German withdrawal from certain equipment and additional tasks and integration of new weapons not specified in the original contract.

Looking towards the changing industrial landscape, we are shifting the emphasis in our approach to Britain's defence industry. Value for money through competition and open procurement will remain our aim. But we must build on the many channels of communication we have with industry and share more of our forward thinking. We must continue to take account of the consequences of procurement decisions for the defence industry. Work is already in hand to examine systematically the technologies and industrial

capabilities that we need to sustain. And we must ensure sufficient resources continue to be put into the research and development of battle-winning technologies. Nor must we neglect the potential for civil sector cross fertilisation. Our creation of six dual-use technology centres is a good example of defence and civil research working together for the common good.

Throughout this process of development the aim of defence procurement has remained constant — to deliver the best possible value for money to the armed forces and the taxpayer. The way we seek to achieve this has remained anything but static. This process of evolution and adaption to new circumstances must and will continue. But the results will not come overnight. I nevertheless take some satisfaction from the National Audit Office's 1994 comparative judgment of the MoD against other defence ministries.

From a review of procurement practices adopted by 11 other countries, the National Audit Office concluded that... the department was performing well. Furthermore... there was little of significance to learn from other countries which would be of benefit to the department. "The department's capital works management systems are essentially sound and compare well with defence organisations overseas and with some UK companies." No reason for complacency, but some cause to believe the recent reforms have pushed us in the right direction.

□ Roger Freeman is Minister for Defence Procurement

Sweet turns into sour for Li Ka-shing

A billionaire tycoon's connections backfire in China. Michael Steinberger reports

When Li Ka-shing began to pour money into China three years ago, the Hong Kong billionaire knew that deep pockets alone would not guarantee a fat return on his investment.

Political clout was the key to doing business in the world's foremost emerging market, and Mr Li quickly came to enjoy unparalleled access to the inner circle of Deng Xiaoping. But now, with the 90-year-old Chinese leader close to death and a succession struggle underway, Mr Li's connections have become liabilities, jeopardising his most ambitious project in China.

Mr Li, 67, presides over an empire. Cheung Kong, his flagship company, is principally involved in property development and accounts for more than 10 per cent of the Hong Kong stock market's capitalisation. He also controls Hutchison Whampoa, one of Hong Kong's oldest and most diversified trading houses, with interests in real estate, telecom-

munications and container terminals.

Both companies are spearheading Mr Li's push into China, but the true driving force behind his efforts there has been the ability to curry favour with the country's regime. He has donated more than \$125 million of his \$6 billion fortune to help China meet its health and education needs. He has also backed the mainland Government in its bitter dispute with Chris Patten, Hong Kong's Governor, over changes to the colony's electoral system. However, his most blatant attempt to win friends in Peking has been to form partnerships with some of the so-called "princelings", Chinese businessmen whose fathers are members of Mr Deng's ruling clique. Mr Li formed an especially good relationship with Zhou Beifang, the son of Zhou Enlai, a lifelong crony of Mr Deng's and the former head of Shougang, China's third-largest steelmaker.

Mr Li helped Shougang obtain a listing on the Hong Kong bourse in 1992, and Cheung Kong took a 12 per cent stake in the firm. For his part, Zhou Beifang introduced the Hong Kong tycoon to Deng Zhifang, Deng

Xiaoping's son, and the three teamed up to establish Shougang Concord, a property development company.

Mr Li's connections paid handsome dividends at first. Cheung Kong and Hutchison entered into a number of lucrative ventures. The ties that Mr Li established with Peking's municipal government were particularly useful. He heads a consortium that is building a \$1.2 billion retail and office complex, Oriental Plaza, in the Chinese capital. Last November in an effort to accommodate Mr Li's 108,000 square-metre project, city officials ordered the closure of a 700-seat McDonald's — cancelling a 20-year lease — because the outlet occupied a site that was to be used for the development. But the preferential treatment accorded Mr Li has now placed Oriental Plaza at the centre of a scandal that is closely connected to the political struggle unfolding in Peking. Late last year work was halted on the project

amid allegations of misconduct by city officials. It now appears that Jiang Zemin, Mr Deng's heir-apparent, is using the probe to conduct a purge of the municipal government, which is seen as a hotbed of opposition to his leadership.

So far, three officials have been charged with providing misleading information about the size of Oriental Plaza, and two others linked to the case, including a vice-mayor of Peking, have committed suicide. Although Mr Li has not been accused of any wrongdoing, he has been told that the Oriental Plaza violates zoning regulations. He has also been instructed to reduce Cheung Kong's 41.4 per cent stake in the project, which remains stalled.

Oriental Plaza is not Mr Li's only concern at the moment. An anti-corruption campaign, launched by Mr Jiang, led to the arrest in mid-February of Zhou Beifang. The arrest left Mr Li badly shaken.

As one political analyst says: "In China, there is no one crowd that can guarantee your success. The question has to be asked: Did Mr Li cover all his bases? I don't think that he did."

'Did Mr Li cover all his bases? I don't think that he did.'

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IT PAYS TO TALK

[illegible]

هكذا من الاهل

Early gains wiped out

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place ten business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
BANKS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
DISTRIBUTORS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
BREWERIES					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
ENGINEERING VEHICLES					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
FOOD MANUFACTURERS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
LEISURE & HOTELS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
MEDIA					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
OTHER FINANCIAL					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
PROPERTY					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
RETAILERS, FOOD					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
RETAILERS, GENERAL					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
WATER					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE

100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
PHARMACEUTICALS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
PRINTING & PAPER					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
SPIRITS, WINES & CIGARS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
SUPPORT SERVICES					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
TEXTILES & APPAREL					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
TRANSPORT					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE

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100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
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100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
SHORTS (under 5 years)					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
LONGS (over 15 years)					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
UNDATED					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
INDEX-LINKED					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE

100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
INVESTMENT TRUSTS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE

100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
PHARMACEUTICALS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
PRINTING & PAPER					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
SPIRITS, WINES & CIGARS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
SUPPORT SERVICES					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
TEXTILES & APPAREL					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
TRANSPORT					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
RETAILERS, FOOD					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
RETAILERS, GENERAL					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE
WATER					
100	Low	Company	Price	%	PE



CANNES

The Deep South is the unlikely location for Terence Davies's new film, *The Neon Bible*



DANCE

Fiona Chadwick supplies most of the magic in London City Ballet's *Giselle* at Sadler's Wells

THE TIMES ARTS



THEATRE

In Hampstead, Jeff Banks Loves My Sister proves less intriguing than its title might suggest



CONCERT

At the Festival Hall, American maestro Leonard Slatkin again shows a rare feel for English music

Lessons from the Bible Belt

CANNES: Geoff Brown reviews the new films by Terence Davies, John Boorman and Wim Wenders

Until now I had always thought that Terence Davies grew up in Liverpool. I stand corrected. The anguished director of *Distant Voices, Still Lives* was clearly born in America's Deep South. At least, that is how it seems from his striking but problematic new film *The Neon Bible*, presented in competition on Tuesday.

His material may be an American novel by John Kennedy Toole. His actors and location may be American. But one whiff of the hero's Bible-Belt childhood, one glance at those neatly patterned images, and we know we are in Davies country.

His ability to transfer his personal world of loneliness, guilt and family strife across the Atlantic gives the film an eerie, disembodied feeling. Toole's story — about a boy in the Forties growing up with a mentally fragile mother and a flamboyant aunt — is an open invitation to rampant Americana, revival meetings, broad southern accents. But Davies keeps things tightly controlled; so much so that for the first time in his films you feel style beginning to outstrip content.

Magic moments remain. Only Davies could make a hand reaching out to touch the moon seem so free from sentimentality. He also coaxes poetry out of digital technology, elongating the young hero David into his teenage equivalent through the miracle of morphing.

Elsewhere, the vigorous symmetry of the shots, the parade of faces speaking straight to camera, make much of the film appear static and over-deliberate. Gena Rowlands, used to emoting at full blast in John Cassavetes's films, must have felt in a straitjacket trying to play Aunt Mae, the nightclub singer who brightens David's life.

In general, the competition films continue to disappoint. Hou Hsiao-



It could have been an open invitation to rampant Americana and revival meetings — but in *The Neon Bible* Terence Davies maintains a tight control over his material

Hsiao, the Taiwanese master of *A City of Sadness*, is at his most inscrutable in *Good Men, Good Women*, a complex analysis of Taiwanese history that would probably be fascinating if only you could penetrate the stylistic fortress Hou places around his material.

If Hou's film has too much intelligence, John Boorman's *Beyond Rangoon* has too little. A star other than Patricia Arquette would certainly help this gaudy yam about an American tourist aghast at human rights abuses in Burma. But

that would still leave unresolved the political naivety, and the synthetic feel to these jungle adventures. "Blanket for you?" a smiling face says as Arquette finally reaches a relief camp. Yes, and the Burger King is on your right.

Wim Wenders's recent films have been so long and aggravating that *Lisbon Story*, lightweight at a mere 100 minutes, comes as a pleasant surprise. The film emerged from a documentary project, and its best features remain the sounds and sights of one of Wenders's favourite

cities. The worse are some childish comments about the state of cinema, the impassive Rüdiger Vogler, and embarrassing attempts at slapstick comedy.

Laughter in general is hard to find, unless you count the trade-press advertisement for *Reptile Man*, featuring Tony Curtis in a green jumpsuit and cape, golden coloured underpants and a smirk. But Gus Van Sant got us all checking with *To Die For*, a breezy satire on America's vacuous TV culture. Handsomely packaged and

slickly written by Buck Henry, the film almost counts as a mainstream product. That is just the medicine Van Sant needed after the dishevelled *Even Cowgirls Get The Blues*.

Yet his iconoclastic spirit still pokes through this hilarious story about Nicole Kidman's small-town girl lusting for TV glory. Few other directors would treat the idiot teenagers who become Kidman acolytes with such affection.

No fond feelings are served by the 52-year-old photographer

Larry Clark. In America, controversy has been raging over whether this raw drama about New York teenagers on the loose could ever be passed for public exhibition. It isn't what you see that hurts: promiscuity, vicious beatings and drug-induced stupors are part of the movie's diet. Only the youth of the characters may come as a shock.

My own worries, though, were mostly aesthetic. When would the babble of voices die down? Where was the drama to give the film tension and shape?

Comedy of gross errors

THEATRE

Jeff Banks Loves My Sister
Hampstead, NW3

LOOKING perfectly hideous in her detested bridesmaid's frock, lipstick horribly smeared, actress Ann Bryson crawls in on her knees, head in hands, groaning "Oh God". That appears to be it as she buries her face in a cushion, seemingly ending it all there and then. After a time, however, she resurfaces. This is not a piece of good luck. An hour later, the crass humour of this one-woman show — an unhappy marriage of stand-up and a wannabe stageplay — had driven me into the ground.

Ann's own lot looks glum to begin with, this being the morning of her spitefully pretty sister's wedding. Ann has a hangover from hell after stag-partying with the lads, and that's before she finds the groom stone-dead and starkers under her sofa. Indeed she comes close to offering up her own boyfriend to replace him at the altar, habituated to sacrificing her happiness for her spoilt sibling. Yet, ultimately, Ann has a happy ending, walking up the aisle in her sister's wedding dress, being filmed by *The Clothes Show* as Bride of The Year.

This must be a comic conclusion. But the comedy, en route, is lamentably childish. It largely consists of Bryson grossing us out. Staggering heavily towards the kitchen amid the beer cans and bag



Ann Bryson: lamentably childish one-woman show

packets, she re-emerges clutching headache powder. She empties the satchel into last night's lager, takes a swig, nearly swallows a soggy cigarette butt then, unfeasibly undeterred, stomachs the rest. She exits to the bathroom whence we hear retching sounds. She re-enters with a spew-spattered towel.

Bryson, pushing the boundaries of just how foetid a person can be in the privacy of her own flat, may be liberatingly un ladylike, but you would have to have downed all the beer in sight to find this funny.

Her performance has not become polished since the Edinburgh Festival. The monologue does touch on issues of sibling rivalry, women's low physical self-worth, and their persistent dreams of white weddings. But the wit is smug and strained.

KATE BASSETT

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DANCE IN LONDON: Debra Craine on fine productions of two great Romantic ballets

Fond farewell to the Wright stuff

Peter Wright's farewell present to the company he has nurtured for the past 20 years is yet another exemplary production of a classic. Birmingham Royal Ballet must count itself one of the luckiest classical companies in the world: Wright's versions of *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Giselle* and *Nutcracker* are among the best anywhere. And now comes *Coppélia*, arriving at Covent Garden two months after its premiere in Birmingham, to complete the Wright legacy.

What is the secret of his success as a producer? Respect for the past and an awareness of the present. Even in a Romantic ballet such as *Coppélia* Wright finds a contemporary dramatic resonance and develops it elegantly, without resorting to twee patronisation. He is helped by his designer, Peter Farmer, whose lovely sets and costumes maintain an atmosphere of comic lightheartedness while illuminating the dark undercurrents of superstition and magic.

On Tuesday night, Miyako Yoshida — Birmingham's star ballerina — led the cast. She

Coppélia
Covent Garden
Giselle
Sadler's Wells

too, is leaving at the end of this season, headed for the main company at Covent Garden.

Yoshida is well suited to the role of the strong-willed Swanilda. Her mime is endearingly emphatic, her pretty chin is proud with obstinacy and her sense of mischief so palpable it seems to kindle the courage of those around her. As for the choreography, she makes it look effortless, as if she is breathing the steps rather than applying them to her body. Even her insouciant mimicry of the Spanish and Scottish dolls in Dr Coppélius's workshop finds her slipping into the differing styles with ease. And her tidy allegro footwork, every step so exactly enunciated, is a delight.

Kevin O'Hare was charmingly roguish as her intended Franz, while Michael O'Hare was profoundly sympathetic as the lonely doctor intent on



Fiona Chadwick and Roland Price in LCB's *Giselle*

bringing his mechanical doll to life. Two big black marks against the company, though: some sloppy ensemble work, especially from the men on Tuesday night, and a screeching bad performance of the Delibes score by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia in the pit — a case of indigestion in the wind section.

London City Ballet is at Sadler's Wells Theatre this

week with its *Giselle*, also handsomely designed by Peter Farmer. Again Farmer has chosen a traditional look, to match the approach of producer Galina Samsova, who has given LCB an attractive, straightforward middle-scale production that serves the story well. Just what the company needs.

On Wednesday night (and again tomorrow night) the title

role was danced by a guest artist, Fiona Chadwick, late of the Royal Ballet. Chadwick is a lovely dancer, well remembered for her dramatic integrity. Her *Giselle* took her time winning our hearts. Act I had its strengths: her tender belief in the superstitious nonsense with the flower petals ("he loves me, he loves me not"); the mixture of fragility and fire in her dancing.

But while she tossed away both her grace and her beauty in the mad scene, the transformation didn't quite cross the necessary line into dementia. Chadwick's glorious moment came in Act II, where her eloquent and generous arms decorated a delicately balanced vision of ghostly desire.

What a shame that around her members of London City Ballet were busy making a mess of things. The Peasant pas de deux was distinctly ropery; peasants and friends generally made a shoddy display of themselves; and Beverly Jane Fry's Myrtha was irritatingly heavy-footed. Roland Price was a competent Albrecht.

CONCERT: Modern British works eloquently performed by an American conductor

NEXT to the music of his native America, the conductor Leonard Slatkin has long since demonstrated a comparable passion for British music, as he did again in this concert with the Philharmonia Orchestra.

And not just the established classics of our repertoire. Slatkin also champions works by the younger generation of British composers, such as the Scottish-born James MacMillan. The conductor has previously performed four of MacMillan's often challenging compositions in this country, and with this concert he added a fourth.

He was joined by the virtuoso percussionist Evelyn Glennie for *Veni, veni Emmanuel*, the Latin tag of an Advent plainsong hiding a lengthy and intricate percussion concerto which Glennie premiered at the 1992 Proms

and which she has since recorded.

Of course, anything that is violently loud and rhythmic is sure to attract easy public acclaim, but in the case of this piece, while the exposure to continuous thumps and thwacks can sometimes seem unrelenting, there is a musical mind at work behind them.

Glennie trotted dutifully back and forth between gongs and an arsenal of drums, while Slatkin drew out the notes of the titular chant in their various guises as a musically unifying theme.

If this was not a wholly convincing demonstration of

Philharmonia/
Slatkin
Festival Hall

the idea that such devotional music can be enhanced by percussion decoration — except perhaps in a highly poetic marimba passage — there can be no doubting the committed skill of the soloist, the firm direction of the conductor, and the resilience of the orchestra.

In a programme sponsored by Bupa for the Council for Music in Hospitals, whose president, the bass Ian Wal-

lace, spoke to the audience of more than 3,500 hospital concerts organised every year, the Philharmonia strings had the platform to themselves for Sir Michael Tippett's *Corelli Fantasia*. It was played with eloquent balance between the three subdivided groups, if not entirely with the desirable warmth of timbre.

William Walton's *First Symphony* of 1933, which Slatkin believes embodies the spirit of its time in its seething restlessness, here had the benefit of a performance that generated a burning conviction from within the music.

On other occasions the work has sounded more incisive or assertive, but here the conductor's steady regard for underlying pulse as well as for instrumental detail resulted in a compelling impact.

NOEL GOODWIN

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THE TIMES
THEATRE
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WEEKEND

Gender bender: Fiona Shaw takes the title role in the National's new *Richard II*, previewing tonight



WEEKEND

Sondheim's blackly satirical musical, Assassins, opens with Denis Lawson at the Derby Playhouse



POP

Summertime, and the livin' is festive: Beautiful South are among the fine acts going *al fresco*



POP

Living, singing proof that attitude counts for more than aptitude: Almond wows the Hanover Grand

Kitbags and kabooogie

What would summer be without rock festivals? More comfortable, certainly, but a lot less groovy

There seems to be some prearranged date in the English calendar when people stop buying your normal Jack Daniels and Coke, and start bringing over trays of iced cider. "It's a summery drink," they chortle. "We can sit on the kerb and watch the buses crash on Camden High Street."

And so you neck six or seven pints, watch your mates' faces turn from healthy pink to gritty, exhaust-fume grey, and *forger* the reason you switched to spirits in the first place: cider gives you cystitis. And as the day trudges bleakly away, the skies hoist their black-and-star-studded night backdrop, and your girly joins suddenly catch fire, the familiar ache reminds you that summer festivals (and their obligatory beverage of cider) are on the way. I spent last year's Reading Festival in a Portalo, painfully listening to the muffled sounds of the Manic Street Preachers playing *Slash and Burn*, and reflecting on the irony of it all.

So what do this summer's festivals have in store for girly rock fans, their rucksacks full of cystitis remedies?

Blur. Mile End Stadium, E3 June 17, £18.50. BRITPOP emperors Blur supported by Sparks and band of the year the Boo Radleys.

Glastonbury. June 23-25. Sold out. THE godmother of all festivals. The sights! The smells! The curries! Joe Banana's Blanket Stall-cum-all-night rave! Recent style magazines have been posting the theory that Glastonbury is being infiltrated by annoying preppy twentysomethings who regard

it as part of the season, something akin to the Henley Regatta. I have no idea what "doing the Season" entails, but if it includes copulating in a Hare Krishna tent and washing your face and body for three days in nothing but a three-litre bottle of R White's lemonade the style rags could be right. If it doesn't, then it's the usual round of sloppy work from hacks with blonde, permed brains.

Besides, Leftfield, Massive Attack, the Stone Roses, Supergrass, Jeff Buckley, PJ Harvey and Tricky are enough to scare off any nouveau yuppies.

Phoenix '95. Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. July 13-16, £58. THE youngest and most relaxed of all the festivals. Promises such sunny delights as five-a-side celebrity football (*Coronation Street* v *East Enders*, apparently), bungee jumping and a funfair, so one will barely have time to thrash one's best friends on the dodgems before scuttling over to see Van Morrison, again.

Bob Dylan, Paul Weller, Suede, Public Enemy, the Orb, Underworld, Tricky, the Get Up 4 U, the blissful G-funk king Warren G, megastar-in-training McAl-



Pop cynics the Beautiful South, set to make Fleadh '95 beautiful in, er, north London

mont and the Verve. Apparently you can take your own blow-up paddling pools, presumably the organisers' way of stopping the on-site showers getting too congested.

Reading Festival, Berkshire. August 25-27. Ticket price to be confirmed. ADVISE to anyone in an up-and-coming band - sell your liver to get a backstage pass. The music industry up sticks

and moves to just outside the M25 for the whole weekend and, as most of the bigwigs are, ahem, fairly tired and emotional by Saturday night, there are rich pickings for contract-hungry popsters.

Menswear weren't even formed at Reading last year, but their enterprising guitarist and Levi jeans model Chris Gentry spent the whole weekend in the backstage beer tent, shamelessly blagging and

ligging. Now he has a £250,000 record contract, two front covers, a *Top of the Pops* appearance and a pop star girlfriend (Donna from Elastica). All this, and he's only just 18!

The Reading line-up is unconfirmed as yet, but the rumours are that Hole, the Boo Radleys and Blur will all be regretting that prawn biryani from the Curry Vahalla stall the next day.

A hold on our hearts

CONCERT

Marc Almond
Hanover Grand, W1

me by his appearances in Moscow and St Petersburg two years ago. Largely unknown in Russia, he had little more than a glimmer, a pianist and the adoration of a small core of young local fans to fall back on. The venues were inappropriate for the brand of bravura

torch songs he favoured at the time, and there were too many civic dignitaries occupying red plush seats to make either concert anything like a walkover. But Almond turned on the magic and created triumph out of nothing. And there was something oddly, bravely British about a flamboyantly gay man making no concessions to circumstance and giving his own constituency within the audiences a performance to cherish.

On this though, the last night of a short British tour, he was back firmly among the wholly faithful and sup-

portive. Buoyed by their enthusiasm, he balanced old hits with material from a forthcoming album, due in September, that showed his creative impetus to have come full circle, back to the stripped-down synth-pop of his early successes with Soft Cell.

Yes, the lyrics of such songs as *The Idol*, *The User* or the current single *Adored and Explored* veer towards the predictable. Yes, their structures - the promising *Brilliant Creatures* excepted - are equally unremarkable. But the elfin-faced man with the velvet shirt and the rash of tattoos continues to make silk purses from contrived sows' ears.

ALAN JACKSON

LONDON

RICHARD II. Fiona Shaw makes a fascinating choice for the title role in Deborah Warner's production, the first at the National since 1972. National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-329 2252). Preview begins tonight, 7.15pm; opens June 2 (5).

RICHARD III. Brian Cox takes on his first Shakespeare production, directing Jasper Britton in the title role, with Brian Protheroe, Hans Thorne, Anne White, Simon Trueman and John Chalk. Play for good weather. Open Air, Regent's Park, NW1 (0171-484 2411). Preview begins tonight, 8pm. Opens May 30, 8pm. Then May 31, June 10, 8pm. Then June 7, 2.30pm. In rep from June 12.

BRITAIN AT ITS BEST. Vernon Handley opens tonight's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra performance with one of Elgar's earliest successes, *Introduction and Allegro*. Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra receives its London premiere, performed by Håkan Hardenberger, and Holst's *Marshall's Suite*. The Philharmonic, Royal Albert Hall, SE1 (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm. (5)

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM. Roger Allam and Philip Franklin play the young Hamlet at town and country in Terry Hand's *Hamlet*.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA. Vanessa Redgrave directs and plays the serpent, and Paul Butler - *Shylock* and the best thing in Peter Sellers' recent *Mercutio* - is in the title role in the last production of the Morning Theatre Society. Riverside Studios 1, Crisp Road, W5 (0171-741 2252). New production, 7.30pm; opens June 1 (5).

BURNING HABITS. Camp and crazy mini-series from the East Village. In eight episodes over two evenings, each episode said to be self-contained, but to forecast the quality. Drift Hall, Chiswick Road, W2 (0171-637 8270). Tue-Sat, 7.30pm. Sun, 8pm. All eight episodes play on June 17.

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI. Juliet Stevenson and Simon Russell Beale in Webster's tragedy of incest, murder and the breakdown of the mind. Wyndham, Chiswick Road, W2 (0171-637 8270). Tue-Sat, 7.30pm. Sun, 8pm. All eight episodes play on June 17.

FIVE GUYS NAMED MORE. The plot is simple: a young man who has been a celebrated musical has been thrown back into the world of the street. Alamy, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.15pm; tomorrow, 2pm and 7.15pm. (5)

HOT WINKADO. Jazz and jargon version of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, with Mario-Poo a trombone player with a local big band and Yum-Yum a duo with a piano. Smash hit musical from Washington DC. Queen's, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-484 5044). Tue-Sat, 8pm. Mat, Thurs, Sat and Sun, 3pm.

NEW LISTINGS

ANGELS (L). A squad of angels help a beautiful team. Unashamedly sentimental family film, with Danny Glover and Christopher Lloyd. William Dear directs. MGM Theatres (0171-434 0031).

CHRISTY (L). Three divorced dads spend a raucous weekend with their kids. Family comedy for male baby boomers, with Matthew Modine, Paul Reiser and Randy Quaid. Director, Sam Weisman. Orion Screenplay (01426 914088). Plaza (0171-722 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).

ED WOOD (L). Tim Burton's wonderful biography of the bizarre man who wrote the worst movie ever, with Johnny Depp, and also Martin Landau as Bela Lugosi. Columbia Pictures Home (0171-498 3323). Site (0171-727 4043). Lumiere (0171-836 0891). MGM: Chelsea (0171-332 5098). Haymarket (0171-439 1527). Odéon: Kensington (01426 914688). Screenplay (01426 914088). Richmond (0181-332 0030). UCI: Whiteleys (0171-226 3520). UCI: Whiteleys (0171-732 3332).

A FEAST AT MIDNIGHT (PG). Gauche but enjoyable goings-on at an English boarding school. With Freddie Fox and Christopher Lee, director, Justin Hardy. MGM Theatres (0171-434 0031). Plaza (0171-722 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).

THE MANGLER (R). Lame and silly horror film from a Stephen King novel about a blood-thirsty laundry machine. Tobo Hooper directs. MGM Theatres (0171-434 0031). Plaza (0171-722 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Barbara Leigh-Hunt queries the handbook. Due in London at the end of June. Riverside Studios 1 (0171-638 8891). Preview begins tonight, 7.30pm; opens May 30, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat, Thurs, 2.30pm and Sat, 3pm. Until June 24 (5).

BOUTHERNWOOD. The annual International Festival comes to a close this weekend with a shock-fall schedule that comes pretty close to something for everyone. A few of the programmes to look for are *Theatre de Complicité*, *Flamenco*, *Reduced Shakespeare Company*, the *Orford Stage Company*, a *Wagnerian* production of *Die Meistersinger* and a *musical* from the *Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra* on Sunday. Box Office Information, (01202 251227).

THEATRE GUIDE

Jerome Kingdon's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only
Some seats available
Seats at all prices

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR. Terry Hand's first production here. Denis Quail plays the fat knight and Richard McCabe an immensely jealous husband. National (Odeon), South Bank SE1 (0171-332 5098). Tonight-Mon, 7.15pm; mat, Sat, 2pm.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. Adrian Noble's richly beautiful production: the outstanding cast includes Alan Rickman, Stella Gonet, Desmond Barrie, Ben Lyons, Barbra Streisand, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.15pm; tomorrow, 2pm and 7.15pm. (5)

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW. The undead pose and prance again. Brad, Frank, N. Furrer and Ruff-Ruff return, with Robin Cousins and Nicholas Parsons in the company. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-332 5098). Mon-Thurs, 8.15pm. Fri and Sat, 7pm and 9.30pm. (5)

THE SILVER TASSIE. Sean O'Casey's fierce and haunting war drama, not seen in London since 1969. Lynda Parker's production goes with full power.

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol **+**) on release across the country

RICHIE RICH (PG). Zlotea's offspring Macaulay Culkin comes to his parents' rescue. Dir. David Zucker. UCI: Whiteleys (0171-722 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).

THE SEXUAL LIFE OF THE BEAVERBAIL (R). Funny, quip sexual comedy. First in an autobiographical trilogy from Belgium's cultural anarchist, Jan Bucquoy. Metro (0171-437 0757). MGM: Piccadilly (0171-437 3561).

BULLETS OVER BROADWAY (15+). Daring Woody Allen comedy set in New York's theatre world of the 1920s. With John Cusack, Chazz Palminteri, Diane Wiest. Barbra Streisand, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Chelsea (0171-332 5098). Haymarket (0171-439 1527). Odéon: Kensington (01426 914688). Screenplay (01426 914088). Richmond (0181-332 0030). UCI: Whiteleys (0171-226 3520). UCI: Whiteleys (0171-732 3332).

DOWN JUAN DEMARCO (15+). Refreshing and quirky romantic farce about a man who thinks himself to be Don Juan. With Johnny Depp, Martin Brandt and Faye Dunaway.

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THEATRE GUIDE

Jerome Kingdon's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only
Some seats available
Seats at all prices

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR. Terry Hand's first production here. Denis Quail plays the fat knight and Richard McCabe an immensely jealous husband. National (Odeon), South Bank SE1 (0171-332 5098). Tonight-Mon, 7.15pm; mat, Sat, 2pm.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. Adrian Noble's richly beautiful production: the outstanding cast includes Alan Rickman, Stella Gonet, Desmond Barrie, Ben Lyons, Barbra Streisand, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.15pm; tomorrow, 2pm and 7.15pm. (5)

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW. The undead pose and prance again. Brad, Frank, N. Furrer and Ruff-Ruff return, with Robin Cousins and Nicholas Parsons in the company. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-332 5098). Mon-Thurs, 8.15pm. Fri and Sat, 7pm and 9.30pm. (5)

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Goodbye to all this

Ron Condon reports on a company that is doing away with an office

At the end of June, a small, ten-year-old software company will close its doors in Feltham, west London — not because it has gone bust, but because it no longer sees any sense in maintaining 1,400 sq ft of office space.

Loud & Bow is going "virtual", allowing all its staff to work from home, communicate by telephone and modem, and, in the process, save the company £30,000 a year.

All records will be kept electronically, allowing the 14 staff, including the office administrator, to operate in a paperless environment. The address on the company letterhead will now be a Post Office box number.

For Richard Dowdeswell, the managing director, the move is the final and logical step in a trend that has been visible for some time. The head office has already ceased to perform any real function.

Though Loud & Bow specialises in software for ICL mainframe computers, it does not have its own mainframe, preferring to develop its software on an ICL system in Stockwell, south London. Loud & Bow rents the time it needs, accessing it via a local call to a data network.

The company, which has a turnover of about £750,000 a year,

has a string of large customers, including the Inland Revenue, the Department of Social Security, British Gas, SG Warburg and River Island Clothing.

What do such leading companies think about one of their suppliers operating without a head office? "British Gas is unfazed by the closure," says Mr Dowdeswell, adding that other customers have taken the same attitude.

Far from worrying about the long-term viability of their supplier, he says, many of the client organisations were excited about how he was going to do it and make it work. Two big local authorities have shown great interest in adopting some of his methods.

He says: "It is easy for us because we are small, but if a business analyst is made, there is no reason why a much larger organisation cannot do the same thing."

From now on, Mr Dowdeswell will hold all meetings with customers in central London at the Institute of Directors, which lets its meeting rooms. "It's not as though we had lovely offices in Feltham to entertain our customers," he says,

"so it's no great loss from that point of view."

The new arrangements will release staff for new work. A bonus for Mr Dowdeswell will be that he expects to have more time to meet customers. He admits that until now he has — like most senior management — made little personal use of technology. With the change looming, he has now had to get to grips with Windows-based PCs, modems and the Internet, and he believes he will become more productive as a result.

So far as the outside world is concerned, nothing will change. The company will, as before, operate two main telephone numbers: one for general inquiries, the other for technical support.

The technical support number is the personal number of one of the staff living in nearby Harrow. BT's Star Service is used so that if she is away or taking another call, the call is routed automatically to the switchboard number, where it can then be put through to another support person. From the customer's point of view,

it is like calling a normal company with real offices.

Mr Dowdeswell says: "All incoming post will go to a PO box number to be electronically scanned by an administrator and kept on file. This is fairly easy for us because we have a relatively small volume of paper."

Having information held electronically means that anyone in the organisation can access files if they need them, just as if they were going to the filing cabinet.

At the same time, he has established the company on the Internet with its own World Wide Web page, so that customers and prospective clients can call up information. He also plans to distribute software upgrades via the Internet to customers which, he says, "is much cheaper than putting it on a tape and posting it".

One oft-quoted drawback of teleworking is loneliness and the loss of staff unity. Mr Dowdeswell recognises that he will have to organise regular meetings of staff, maybe several times a month to maintain team spirit. "I'll also be on the phone to people on most days," he says, "so there will be no loss of contact."

Mr Dowdeswell hopes that in addition to the instant cost savings he will make by closing the offices,



Richard Dowdeswell believes that closing his office will generate many fresh opportunities

the changes will generate plenty of fresh opportunities, many of them difficult to predict.

"Radical change brings new opportunities," he says, "and though it will take us some time to make the change, we shall be able to do new things, such as putting

our services and people on the Internet." For instance, one aspect of Loud & Bow's business involves sending programmers to work on customer premises, but this can be costly if people have to live away from home.

"We are already negotiating with

customers about working remotely," Mr Dowdeswell explains. "If someone in Burnley, Lancashire, wants us to send someone to work with them, we'll agree provided they can spend just one day a week there and do the rest of the work from home. It's perfect feasible."

The Department of Information Systems has recently been established creating the following new position within the Tate Gallery, London.

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The starting salary will be within the range of £27,100 - £37,000 per annum.

For further details and an application form apply by postcard only to:

The Recruitment Officer, Tate Gallery, Millbank, London SW1P 4RG.

The closing date for the return of completed application forms is Friday 16th June 1995.

The Tate Gallery is an equal opportunities employer.

In yesterday's Recruitment Section of The Times, an advertisement placed on behalf of The Tate Gallery invited applications to three new positions within the Information Systems Department. Two of these positions, namely the IT Operations Manager and the Network Support Officer, are not current vacancies. Times Newspapers wish to apologise to the Tate Gallery and to applicants who have already responded to these positions for their error and the considerable inconvenience caused.

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The quest for great espresso

An Italian coffee supplier is using a supercomputer to make a better cup of coffee, writes Chris Partridge

Supercomputers usually used to probe the basic structures of the universe are being harnessed to more practical problems — such as the quest for the perfect cup of espresso.

Many Italians would regard developing better espresso as a much more urgent problem than unlocking the secrets of the atom, and Dr Ernesto Ily of the Trieste-based coffee supplier Ilycaffè is certainly one of them.

He has put together a group of mathematicians and software scientists to use the massive Cray supercomputer recently installed at the University of Bologna to work out exactly how hot water flows through ground coffee in an espresso machine.

Supercomputers are usually used for the really big problems, modelling global weather systems or predicting macroeconomic trends. Bologna University's new Cray is



Dr Ernesto Ily: research intended to investigate molecular physics.

But finding out what really goes on as hot water trickles through coffee is not a trivial problem either, according to Dr Ily.

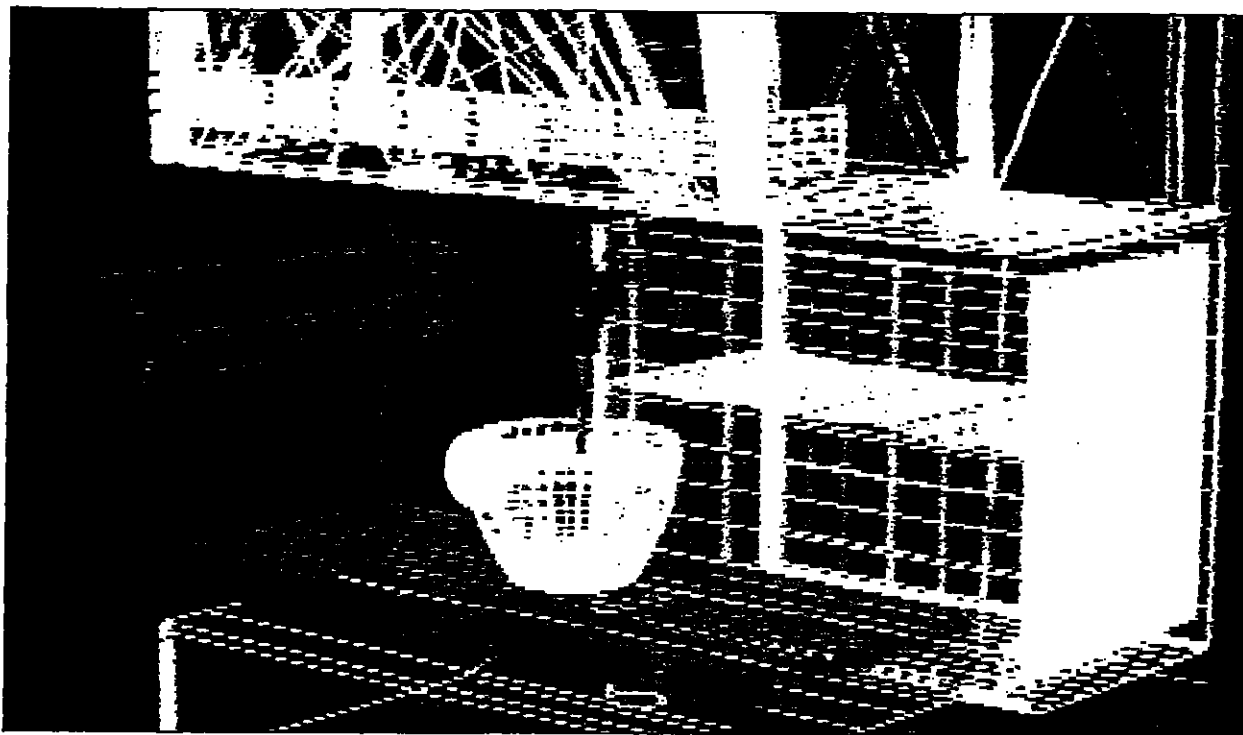
"Making espresso is a very tricky balance, because the water flow must be exactly one millilitre per second, but the pressure is high and the particle size is very irregular," Dr Ily says. Other factors include the oils necessary for

flavour and the bubbles of carbon dioxide which generate the foam on the surface.

Even in finely ground espresso, the coffee particles come in a huge range of sizes, and each size contributes something different to the final drink. The shape of the infusing chamber also affects the final brew.

As a result, development of today's espresso machine has been largely a matter of trial and error, Dr Ily says. His aim is to use the supercomputer to find out for the first time what really goes on in the machine.

Preliminary work on powerful workstations has already yielded interesting results. Simulations of small parts of the bed of coffee show that the water does not flow uniformly through it but forms fast-flowing channels within a slower-moving mass of water. This means that some of the coffee is being washed out and



Researchers will use the computer to find out exactly what happens when the water reaches the coffee granules

some not sufficiently brewed, according to Dr Ily.

The next step is to try to alter some of the factors, such as the size of the coffee grains and the pressure of the water, to see how the process changes.

The problem is that even with the high-power workstations Dr Ily presently uses, running each simulation takes more than a week. Using the Cray's huge array of 240

processors working in parallel on the problem, it should take a matter of hours.

The Cray also has enough power to run three-dimensional simulations instead of just two, so that it will be possible to tell if a dot on the screen is a small particle or just the tip of a big particle.

"Our aim is to make a machine which sends a uniform front of slow-moving

water and get the ideal size distribution of the coffee granules," Dr Ily says.

He expects his research programme to enable his company to determine the best coffee, the ideal pressure under which it should be held in the machine, the proper pressure for the water and whether additives, such as oils, would improve the brew.

Dr Ily, the son of the

founder of Ilycaffè, Francesco Ily, who invented the espresso machine as it stands today, is also taking up some advanced British research. An electronic "nose" developed by the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology is being used in the production process.

● The author is editor of Parallelogram, a supercomputing magazine.

Listening to your e-mail

COMPUSERVE subscribers using Windows can add a voice e-mail package which lets them send messages containing speech, music and sound effects, Matthew May writes.

Users can mix speech with music, insert "sound bites" or combine multiple sound files to play simultaneously. The most exciting benefit, the online service says, is the ability to convey laughter and other emotions online.

Voice e-mail costs £20 and can be downloaded into your PC from CompuServe over the phone. The drawback is that anyone wanting to listen to your message will also have to have a copy of the same software to uncompress it.

Sound uses far more computer space than text. A one-minute file, for example, can create a sound file of 5.2 megabytes that could cost £9 to send over CompuServe.

The answer is compression, which reduces the file to 236k and the cost to about 40p.

As the sound files are binary, CompuServe only allows them to be sent to other CompuServe members and not over the Internet or to other online services.

Can you keep a secret?

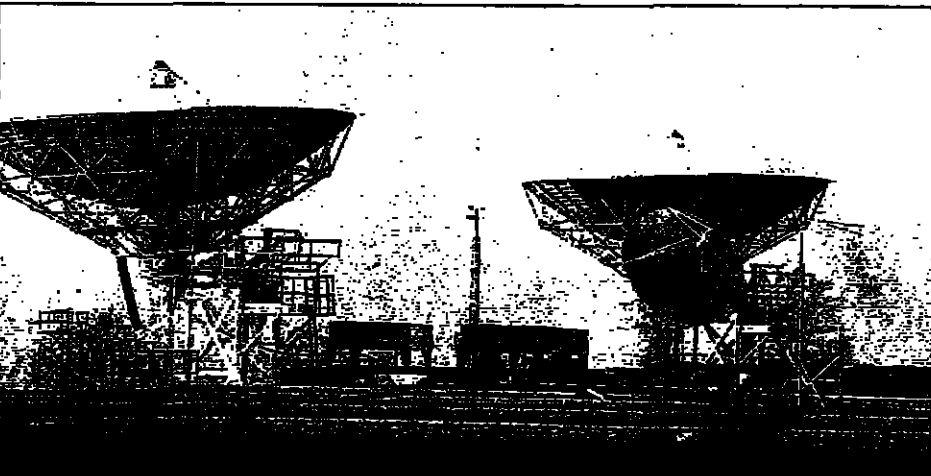
Max Glaskin on a modem which can keep the hacker out

Modems costing £2,500 each are being bought by the Government because they can keep a secret. They are designed to be hacker-proof and the ultimate in "firewalls" designed to stop unauthorised remote access to computer systems that hold valuable information.

The Proscriptor modems are made by Avant Guardian, a company set up in London five years ago with the sole aim of making networks secure. Since it is in the nature of the security market to keep its cards close to its chest, finding out who is buying the modems is not straightforward.

Richard Mackenzie, Avant Guardian's technical director, says: "The boys in Cheltenham like them and we are expecting our first orders from a major department of state in the near future." Unscrambled, it means that the Ministry of Defence is expected to take delivery of up to 100 such modems next month.

Of course, since this article has been sent to *The Times* across the public telephone network between two unsecured modems costing under £200 each, some of you may have read this already, particularly if you happen to work at GCHQ. Modems are an exit door from one computer to a big wide world of information



Government departments are constantly looking for ways to keep information secret

but they can also let unauthorised people in.

Usually, once modems have exchanged their greetings of whistles and beeps like a fax machine — a sequence called "training" — then hackers can try to crack password or other authentication software and

The special modems have an extra processor chip inside designed to stop hackers before they can even try to log on. The processor — which took six months to design — uses the time during the training sequence to interrogate the modem that is making the

every calling modem. The most cunning feature, though, is that the hacker will not necessarily realise that he or she has been thwarted. The special modem can seamlessly divert a suspect call into a second channel on the modem which then sends data from a mock log-on screen.

"The hacker can play on this to his heart's content," Terry Harris, chief executive of Avant Guardian, says, "during which time his access methods can be analysed and the call traced."

As the modem has a secure channel and an insecure channel, it could be used both for secure data and for public access. This would allow businesses that want to link their computer networks to the Internet, to host World Wide Web pages for example, without giving hackers a back door to their business and accounting secrets.

The most cunning feature is that the hacker will not necessarily realise that he or she has been thwarted

gain unauthorised access. This is the problem the security and espionage departments want to avoid. Until now, they have had to rely on secure lines which are physically independent of all other networks, or on increasingly sophisticated encryption algorithms.

incoming call. If it does not have the correct chip, the calling modem is not allowed to connect.

The processor also changes its interrogation signal every time the modem receives a call so nobody can record the signal and copy it. In effect, it asks a different question of

Charity's plea for computer donors

A pioneering charity which allows children with speech difficulties to communicate through the Internet says that it needs at least £10,000 to keep going.

The Chatback Trust, based in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, says it is Britain's only charity dedicated to relieving the frustration and loneliness of children with special needs by providing them with access to the World Wide Web.

The global network, which links computers via phone

The Chatback Trust is looking for help for its children with special needs

lines, can allow children with conditions like cerebral palsy to communicate and gain confidence, says Tom Holloway, the charity's founder and executive director. The trust, started in 1987, now links more than 60 special needs schools. Money is needed to provide computer training for teachers and parents and to maintain

the services of an educational psychologist who is monitoring the progress of disabled children on the Internet.

"Children who are unable to make themselves understood verbally often feel cut off from their peers, lack motivation and feel uncertain about their future as dependent adults. I developed the trust to alleviate

this," Mr Holloway says. "The Internet is a non-prejudicial medium where the children can explore and research. It is especially useful for children with special needs."

The trust also wants to launch a "Buddy Scheme" to enable hardware and software manufacturers to sponsor children with special needs and donate PC equipment.

The Chatback Trust is on 01926 888333.

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Numbers game clients can win

Why can't a
phone number
be for life?
Annie Turner
reports

Britain's economy has benefited greatly from having a competitive telecommunications industry in terms of choice of supplier, more services and falling costs.

Even so, little has been done about one of the most basic problems for business: the expense and disruption associated with changing telephone numbers. There is no longer any technical reason for a phone line to be stuck with the number the installer gave it, but this advantage has not been passed on to customers.

This is not to say that the telecommunications Utopia of everyone being issued with a telephone number that works on all kinds of networks, regardless of where they are, is imminent. But it is absurd that even if a company is staying in the same premises, but opts to change from, say, BT to Mercury, it must change its telephone numbers.

Ofel, the telecommunications watchdog, is trying to introduce this so-called number portability and extend its scope to cover an organisation changing premises and changing operator at the same time, providing the new site is near the original. BT agrees in principle, but, contrary to Ofel's recommendations, refuses to



So many phones to install, so many numbers to change: but telecommunications engineers would do less if "follow-me" numbers were widespread

foot the bill for putting it into practice.

Because BT controls, but no longer owns, most British telephone numbers, the matter was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission three months ago but shows no sign of being resolved quickly.

Despite this, "follow-me" or personal numbering services that try to attach phone numbers to people, rather than to particular lines, are starting to

become available in earnest this year.

The national code change on Easter Day made provision for this burgeoning market, which could be fuelled by a predicted surge in teleworking, reserving dialling codes for personal number services. The 07 prefix is for fixed lines, the 04 for mobile phones.

When the pioneering Flextel company launched its personal number service in 1993, it did so by leasing 100,000

numbers from the cellular operator Mercury One-2-One (starting 09567). The company charges a sign-up fee of £120 per existing line, plus a £2 monthly charge thereafter. For that fee, the subscriber can choose to have one or two personal numbers to run in tandem with the original phone number — or can cease to publish the original number altogether.

Calls to the personal numbers can be rerouted to any

British destination specified by the subscriber, be it a fixed line, mobile telephone, voice mail system or answering machine. Fax traffic can also be accommodated. The subscriber can alter the destination at will, from any telephone, by calling Flextel's central administration number, inputting a PIN, the personal number and the new destination, using the telephone key pad.

This means, for example,

that if someone works at home for part of the week, they are not obliged to divulge their home telephone number to business contacts and can reroute business calls to their employer's voicemail system in the evenings and at weekends.

At present, Flextel calls cannot be routed to international destinations, but if demand is sufficient, such a service might be introduced for, say, a £10 monthly fee. Having to use a mobile prefix has caused some confusion and from next month Flextel will be able to allocate 07 numbers.

Flextel's service differs from others in several ways. For example, cellular operator Orange's sophisticated call-diversion facilities are standard and covered by the monthly fee. The caller pays for the diverted leg for calls rerouted to international and mobile destinations. But the service is open only to Orange subscribers, whereas Flextel's is open to everyone.

BT says it will offer personal numbers when there is enough customer demand, but meanwhile it offers a Call Divert service that can be set up from any BT telephone attached to a digital exchange. Call Divert costs £7 a quarter. The main drawback is that the divert can be set up and cancelled only from the "home base" telephone.

From the business users' point of view, the introduction of more services is encouraging. The more follow-me services there are on the market, the more operators will strive to differentiate themselves by the range of facilities they offer, and by competitive pricing.

The man who can't wait for the future

Peter Cochrane wants his messages instantly. Nick Cottam reports

Four years ago Professor Peter Cochrane, head of BT's advanced applications and technologies department, sent his 600 staff a simple message: if they wanted to communicate with him, they had to do it electronically. Anything sent by fax was liable to end up in the bin.

If this sounds a draconian way to run a department — even one with so direct a stake in the future — Professor Cochrane has a stronger reason than most for getting his troops on line.

Much of his time is spent trying to convince the outside world that the information highway is ripe for investment in virtually every walk of life, from the ways in which people shop and learn to the provision of medical treatment. Electronic messaging is just the tip of the iceberg.

"When I set out to communicate," he says, "I want instant gratification. If I get any kind of delay, I am frustrated; anything over 30 seconds can become very irritating."

If this seems over the top for those of us who never jump a fax queue and are still grateful for a same-day facility, it is undoubtedly a sign of the times as information in all its many forms takes to the highway.

Andrew Gray, managing director of the online service Compuserve, says: "These days most documents that end up getting faxed start life in an electronic format. In the past few years, there have been no technical innovations to the fax, while online communications is still in its infancy, and will continue to develop."

Like BT, most large companies now operate some form of internal e-mail system, which allows staff to communicate within offices and between sites without so much as a sheet of paper coming out of the fax machine. Project teams which once waited for acres of shiny paper reports before collating and rearranging them like a *Blue Peter* presenter can now receive the whole lot on their computer screen.

Documents that once had to find their way around the office, if not on the fax machine, and were then carried by the office messenger, can simply be placed in an electronic shuttle before being downloaded to an individual's personal directory on the company network.

For the present, at least, the

electronic downside lies in trying to send anything other than text, a process where connection problems between different modems and the quality of the material sent can have you rushing back to the fax machine.

Even electronic devotees such as IBM, which has been using e-mail for all internal communications for the past five years, have to go back to paper when good graphics and crisp colours are involved.

The solution, predicts David Thorpe, IBM's work group manager, will lie in the same open standards route that turned the fax machine into the ubiquitous device it is today. But we are not quite there yet.

The pressure for open standards comes from both sides. If companies and individuals are to put their faith in electronic communication, it has to be as simple as sending a fax. That means finding a way of synchronising modem speeds and carrier addresses so any document can be sent electronically without worrying whether it will arrive and what it will look like.

If you try to send something via a modem, there is a fair chance you will have to negotiate the link-up first — a bit like having

to agree a workable STD code before using the phone.

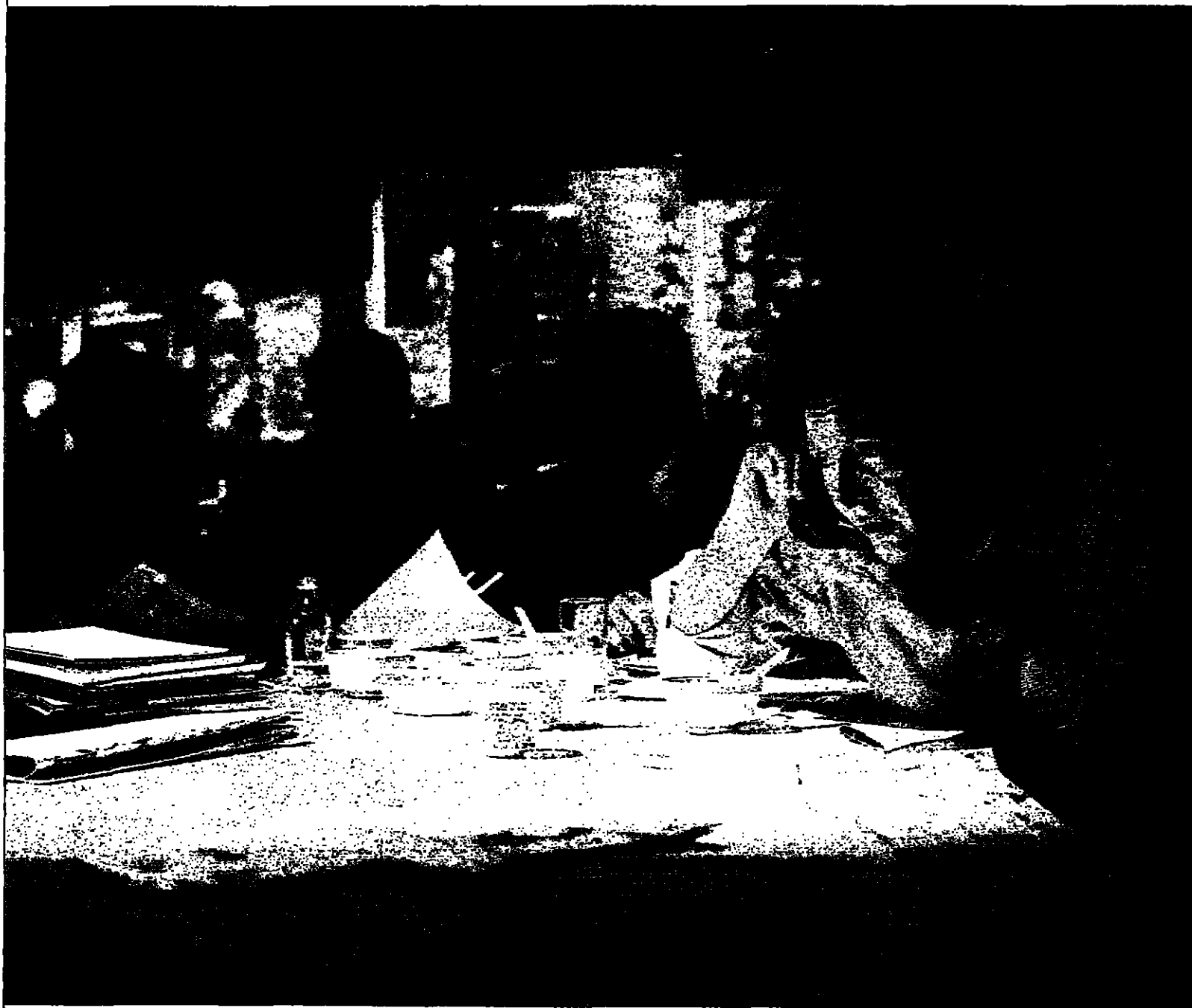
If this sounds a death knell for the use of fax machines in business, the same goes for the home. In America, the Internet and online services are taking off with bewildering speed. Instead of buying a fax for messages, anyone with a personal computer and a phone line can now choose either a built-in fax modem or the mail facility of an online service such as Compuserve, which says it is gaining 4,500 new members a week in Britain.

The fax may still look the simplest bet, but electronic mail could be acquiring the critical mass to change all that — and it's cheap. For the price of a local call, online subscribers can send messages to other users anywhere in the world. They can receive them at any time of the day or night, whether the computer is on or off. When the service truly does reach the great mass of homes, it is this e-mail equivalent of the answerphone that may lay to rest any more thoughts of a new fax-phone combination.



Dr Cochrane: Don't fax me

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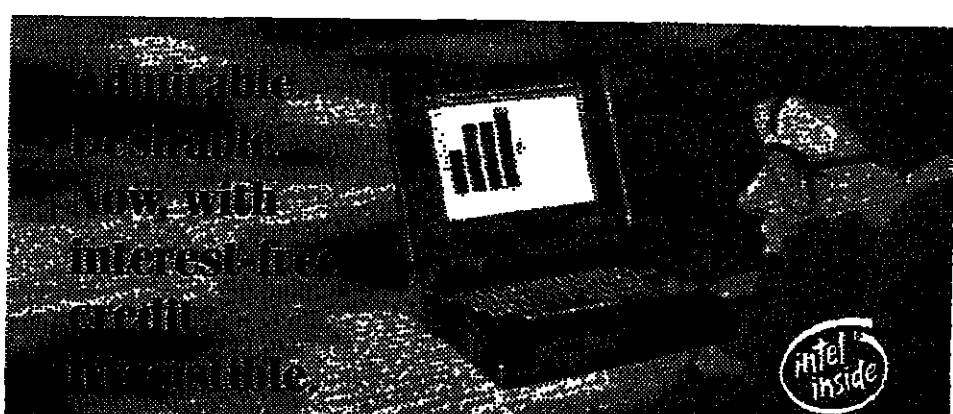
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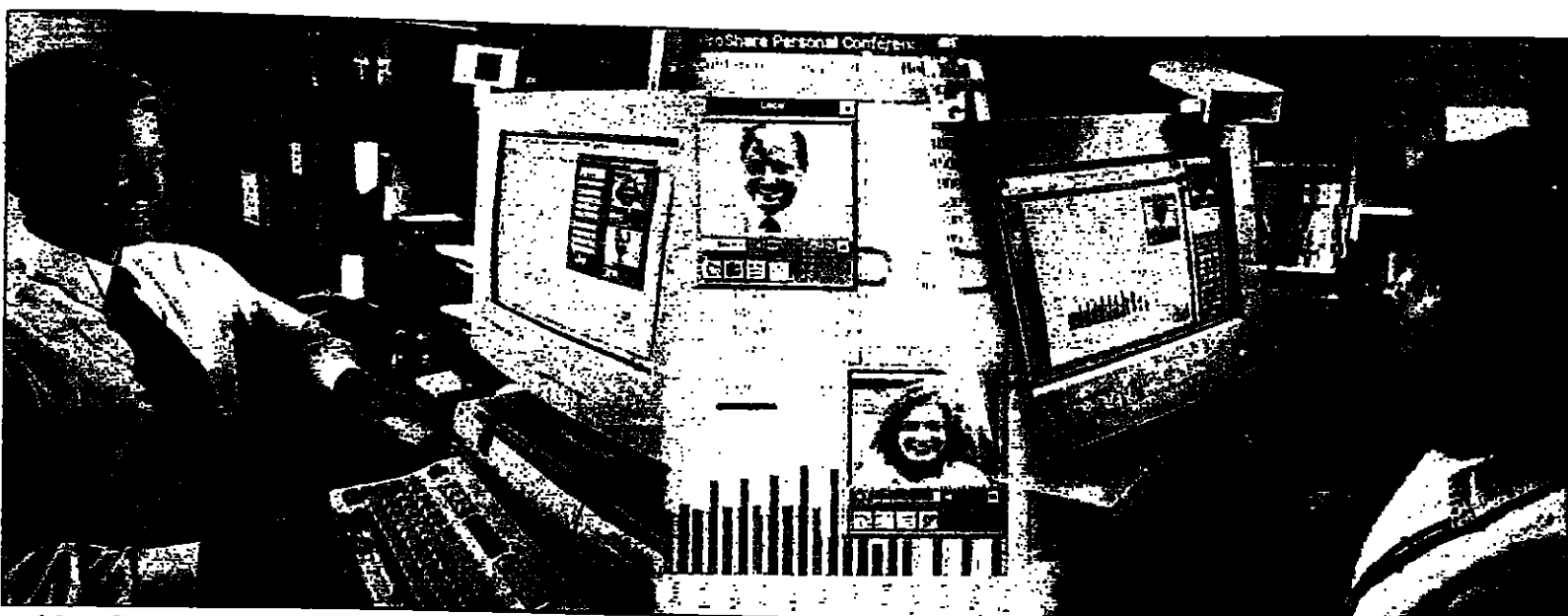
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هكذا فى الاصل

Video telephones have left science fiction and reached real life, writes Tony Dennis



A vision of communications in the future: videophone makers and BT believe that their products are a cost-effective alternative to business travel

See, speak and hear down the line

Real life has finally caught up with science fiction. After a delay of at least 30 years, it is now possible to buy something that closely resembles a true video telephone.

At present, these products are large, expensive and nowhere near as realistic as the videophones portrayed in science fiction epics such as *Star Trek*. But the first tentative steps towards combining a television with the telephone have now been taken.

The video telephone is, of course, a natural extension of available technology. While you are talking to someone, why shouldn't you be able to see them as well as hear them? In the computing world, electronic mail messages, for example, are frequently criticised for being impersonal and misleading.

A sentence spoken with sarcasm can contain a completely different message from the same words delivered in a flat tone. The claim is that if you can see as well as hear the person to whom you are talking, your conversation will become radically different from the impersonal audio-only encounters offered by today's telephones.

The chief problem is that existing telephone networks simply weren't designed for carrying both video and speech. Enter the ISDN (integrated services digital network), the all-digital version of the telephone network. ISDN will eventually oust ordinary analogue telephone networks in the same way as the compact disc has displaced the vinyl long-playing record.

ISDN is available in nearly all European countries, as well as most of North America. Though the take-up of ISDN lines has been small so far, the growth rate in Germany, France and some American states — such as California — is starting to rise.

In Britain, the problem is cost. BT charges £400 plus VAT to install the most basic ISDN line plus £84 plus VAT per quarter instead of £21 for an ordinary domestic line.

For business use, it seems that both the videophone manufacturers and BT hope that the other party will reduce their charges and help to make videophones a cost-effective alternative to some business travel.

There are now kits that can turn an ordinary IBM PC-compatible machine into a videoconferencing terminal. All that is needed is a card known as a codec to drive the camera and an ISDN terminal card to funnel all the necessary data down an ISDN line. Probably the most successful

product in this area is the Pro Share personal video conferencing system 200, sold by Intel, and which starts at about £1,500 — plus the cost of a powerful PC if you do not have one. Not only does Pro Share come with all the necessary hardware — such as a camera to place on top of your PC's monitor — it also comes with applications-sharing software. The latter allows PC users to share the data on their PCs while simultaneously discussing the information over a video link.

For instance, both users can look at financial data held in the same Windows spreadsheet. Then one person can circle part of the document, using the mouse to indicate in which area he or she is particularly interested.

Intel's approach assumes a certain degree of computer expertise on behalf of its owner. If video and ISDN communications are to be handled simultaneously,

the purchaser must also own an up-to-date PC with at least a Pentium-based processor.

BT has come up with a product that is aimed at the ordinary executive who does not have the familiarity with Microsoft Windows and PCs needed to persuade Pro Share to run properly. This £2,500 videophone, known as Presence, is simple enough for virtually anybody to operate. All you need to do is plug the Presence into the mains and an ISDN wall socket and you can make a video telephone call. How good is the image quality? With Presence, the image is acceptable which — given the dire quality of previous offerings — is a major breakthrough.

An entry level version of ISDN (termed Basic rate) effectively provides the user with two separate telephone lines. With Presence, it is possible to share the same line, resulting in a video image that resembles an early silent movie. Television quality this is

not, but the image is in colour and most of the time there is no discernible time-lapse between the image on screen and spoken conversation.

To become established, any new technology needs standards. Fortunately, there is one coming along for videophones and the Presence can communicate with similar compatible devices, such as the £3,600 Personal Communications Computer from Olivetti and the latest version of Intel's Proshare. The communications software that would permit a Presence to provide full applications sharing with another PC user is, however, still under development.

Whether videophones will find a market at present prices is anyone's guess. All the necessary items to turn a PC into a videophone, such as camera cards and ISDN terminal adapters, are already available separately. A PC user could therefore obtain all the requisite pieces for under £1,000. Better still, the required software for handling video and audio — a program known as CU-See Me — is available free over the Internet.

The next generation of videophones will inevitably be more compact, of better quality and cheaper. If ISDN starts being sold at a reasonable price in Britain, it could be a natural fit with video telephony. Once the technology of seeing yourself on television wears off, perhaps the videophone could become a part of daily life.

How to boost profit margins — by telephone numbers

If you buy a National Lottery ticket or dream of owning a Porsche 911, then think telephone numbers. Memorable digits such as the 0645 100 000 lottery claims number or the 0345 91911 link to the ultimate sports car company are rapidly becoming *de rigueur* in the field of direct response promotions.

According to BT, which has about 85 per cent of the market, any organisation can ask for its own special freephone (0800) or local rate (0345) number, although this doesn't necessarily mean it will be successful. If you really want something on the lines of a certain hotel group's 0800 404040 connection or the wise owl 0800 282820 (twee twee twee) of a widely promoted financial services line, not only must it be available but the chances are that you will have to be a

needed clout to advertising and telemarketing campaigns, which seek to generate immediate responses. What better calling card for a 24-hour telephone banking service such as First Direct than 0800 242424?

Adrian Coleman, an account director with the advertising agency HHCL, believes that British marketing people are rapidly becoming less coy about including telephone numbers in their promotional campaigns.

Nevertheless, only 8 per cent of advertisements in Britain carry a phone number, while in America, where direct response is as much an issue of geography as anything else, the figure is more than 80 per cent.

"We are moving towards a situation where the consumer wants a more direct relationship with the brand name," says Mr Coleman whose company designed Mercury's own 0500 500500 freephone campaign around the nostalgic tones of the comedian Harry Enfield.

To prove the point, Mr Coleman gives the example of a special number attracting 1.3 million callers as part

Memorable numbers bring in the business

of the campaign for a well-known fizzy drink. It takes 2 2 Tango as they say.

The commercial logic for BT and Mercury is to encourage special numbers which are actually going to help to generate more traffic.

BT, for example, says it turned down an application from a local radio station for a "highly memorable" number because its weekly phone-in show would have been answering only one in every 200 calls.

Not only would a numerical rarity have been taken out of circulation, but the service provider bears the cost of routing all those engaged calls and most callers are left frustrated by an easy to remember numeric jungle which actually gets them nowhere.

Good telecommunications business derives from campaigns like that of Euro-

tunnel. The central message of the company's 35-minute Channel crossing had the number to match: 0990 353535.

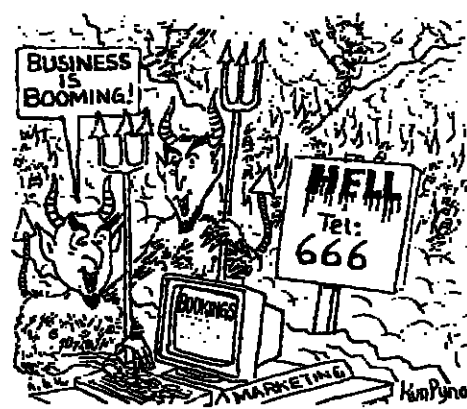
Assuming that an organisation passes the volume-of-business test, the cost of a special number will depend on who makes the choice. If, like Porsche, you have the right profile and successfully

apply for a product or service defining-number then BT will charge £300 a quarter for the privilege.

If, like most 0800 subscribers, you are willing to be less discerning and allow BT to choose from available reserves, the cost comes down to £50 a quarter.

Mercury, which was refused a share of the 0800 action, has had to work hard to establish its freephone 0500 and local rate 0645 numbers. Like BT, it talks of a trade-off between desirable numbers and the amount of traffic that they are going to generate.

NICK COTTAM



Small, cheap and much faster

Modem makers are at long last improving their products

The modem, linking a telephone to a personal computer, is one of the rising stars of the telecommunications world.

Only five years ago, you could spend several hundred pounds on a slow, unwieldy piece of kit that might never

get you online. Today, modems are being portrayed as simple, efficient, inexpensive add-ons that should be an essential item in any business person's computer armoury. There is more than a grain of truth in this change of image.

A modern notebook PC modem is now the size of a thick credit card, can send and receive data at the rate of 14,400 baud, a speed we could only dream of a couple of years ago, and will also double as a fax machine.

The tried and tested axiom of PC marketing — that something smaller, faster and cheaper will always sell — is working again. The British Europe's early adopters of PC communications technology. In America, about 50 per cent of modern computers now boast a modem. In the UK, the rate is between 30 and 35 per cent, compared with 18 to 22 per cent elsewhere in Europe. The widespread interest, and occasional hype, about online services and the Internet have made modems hot-sellers.

A trawl through the modem discussion area of any online service shows that many users still fail to make their units work to the full extent that the makers promise. Fax software, in particular, is a source of constant difficulties across a broad spectrum of machines, modems and software.

US Robotics, the modem maker that leads the British market, is trying to take some of the pain out of modem ownership with two user booklets that document the principles of online communications in everyday English and outline the features you can expect from modern PC telecommunications.

Clive Hudson, the company's UK managing director, says: "People are starting to lose some of their fear of the modem but there is still some way to go."

Today, the standard modem speed is 14,400 baud, but manufacturers such as US Robotics are selling newer units which promise twice that rate but cost about £100 more. Only a few people will be able to gain any benefit from these units at the moment. To make use of them, you need to be talking to a computer which also has a 28,800-baud modem. Most of the main online networks and Internet

providers have yet to offer connection at this speed.

Speed can also be deceptive. Doubling the rate at which you connect to an online service will greatly increase the rate at which you can download files from it. But much of the time you spend online normally involves browsing from one part of the service to another, and that speed depends more on the computer system of the network than your modem.

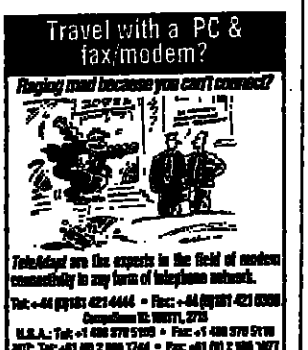
Most networks are now running as fast as they can internally — moving from a 14,400-baud modem to a 28,800 will cut your time spent online only if you are in the business of shifting large chunks of data around, not simple, short e-mail messages.

By the end of this year, Mr Hudson believes, 14,400 will have turned into the most basic speed level for modems and 28,800 will be much more affordable. At that stage, an upgrade to something faster may make sense, although you should not expect to see a dramatic halving of your data phone bills.

Modern modem speeds also depend on compression and good, clear phone lines. The data rates quoted are always the maximum and are not guaranteed.

If you have a 14,400 modem, check for yourself how fast it works by timing a one-megabyte file as it comes down the line from an online network. If you are truly running at 14,400, it should be a little over 11 minutes; often it can be half as long again.

DAVID HEWSON



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THE TIMES FRIDAY MAY 26 1995



David Hewson offers a guide through the mobile phones jungle

Pitched into battle against them are two new entirely digital rivals, Orange and Mercury's One-2-One. To confuse matters, the digital networks divide into two standards — GSM, which has been adopted by Vodafone and Cellnet, and the higher frequency PCN standard used by the two newcomers.

Some of the more dubious airline tariffs have disappeared in recent years, but the rates that remain still, in many cases, make it difficult to predict which service is the best for you.

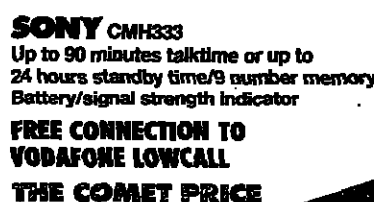
In reality, the costs of owning a mobile phone break down into three categories — the price of the handset, the fixed monthly airline fee which you pay whether you use the phone or not, and the amount you are charged for

These differences may be less marked for heavier phone users. If you plan to make a lot of calls each month, you will normally be better served with a larger monthly fee and lower call charges. However complex the sets of tariffs you may encounter when buying a phone, the general rule that low monthly subscriptions spell high charges per call — and vice versa — always applies. And if you get it wrong when you buy your handset, you may be locked into the tariff for some time.

This will put increasing pressure on Vodafone and Cellnet who, unlike their PCN rivals, have to squeeze their GSM digital services alongside the analogue ones in the same 900 MHz frequency range. The more analogue continues to grow, the harder GSM subscribers may find it to stay online.

As mobile phones continue to grow as an everyday personal electronics item, that battle for an available line could start to give the PCN networks an important advantage in the years to come.

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The cost and rarity of the hardware has so far limited the use of digital networks, but Betpoint already has more than 20 subscribers who regularly use mobile phones linked to a portable computer. One of his subscribers is Sir

The aim is to produce a pocket computer that can double as a mobile phone, enabling the user to receive e-mail, faxes and pager messages on a pocket-sized unit.

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DUNDAIR	106 20

Scots stick to basics for opening encounter

FOR Scotland, the relief that the phoney war is over is immense. Nine days after arriving in South Africa their preparations are complete, the weather is superb and with the injury-free squad in fine fettle, the ingredients for a successful campaign are in place. There is a keen sense of anticipation in the air.

It has been difficult for the Scots to know exactly the best way to prepare for a game in which, in many ways, they are on a hiding to nothing, against opponents they know little about. They are expected to win easily up and will do so — but nothing is being taken for granted. This is not the time for elaborate play, even against opponents as hapless as the Côte d'Ivoire.

If they score a handful of points, all well and good. But the first task will be to establish control, draw tight the sting of their excitable opponents and then, if and when



tanned, and, as he said, he is "straining at the leash". "For me the buzz is better this time than at either of the two previous World Cups. It has always been one of my ambitions to play rugby in South Africa and we are just about there. The whole place is gripped by World Cup fever, and I am delighted I am out here as part of the Scottish team."

On the immediate challenge, Hastings insists Scotland will win, provided the team concentrates. There will be no repeat of the humdrum performance against Madrid earlier this month and no room for complacency. On Scotland's long-term prospect, he is upbeat. "If we produce the form of the five nations' and up that by five to ten per cent, we will do very well. But we have to get into a match, and once that is out of the way, we'll be able to assess things."

There have been rumours that Hastings is not entirely happy with the team he leads in his 57th international and his tenth in World Cup competition. He would like to have seen some of the lesser lights being given the opportunity to shine, however briefly. Privately Hastings has let it be known that his input in selection has been minimal.

To give players such as Cameron Glasgow their first, and probably only, cap would have raised morale still further. Team spirit has been one of the main reasons behind the success of the past few months and Hastings is anxious that this should not be jeopardised. The hard-headed pragmatism of Duncan Paterson, the manager, has won the day, however.

Like a thoroughbred emerging after a harsh winter, he is enjoying the sun on his back, with temperatures in Transvaal in the mid-seventies and conditions conducive to attacking rugby. Scotland intend to play their part to the bitter end — just as their captain observed.

SCOTLAND: G Hastings (Watership, captain), G Shaw (Melrose), K Logan (Dunfermline), G Chalmers (Melrose), B Redpath (Aberdeen), P Dunne (Glasgow), K McGee (Glasgow), S Campbell (Dundee), D Watt (Melrose), P Watson (Northampton), R Wainwright (West Hartlepool).
COTÉ D'IVOIRE: V Kouassi (Glasgow), P Bouzo (Glasgow), J-B Sathier (Glasgow), L Nkomo (Glasgow), C Gbela (Glasgow), A Dali (Glasgow), P Duguet (Glasgow), Bay (Glasgow), E Angouan (Glasgow), T Dohi (Glasgow), P Pire (Glasgow), A Kone (Glasgow), G Bado (Glasgow), I Leseli (Glasgow), D Sankou (Glasgow).

necessary, cut loose. The margin of victory will not matter, the quality of the performance will. Rob Wainwright, at No 8 this afternoon, said that Scotland would be playing basic, percentage rugby.

"That should be good enough to score tries. We don't want to use all our secret moves in the first game. We must concentrate on our own game and not worry about the opposition getting in our way."

And if the west Africans should resort to strong-arm tactics? "We are all big boys here and can look after ourselves. If it does happen, we will just have to run round even faster — and run the aggression out of them."

As for Gavin Hastings, on the eve of his third World Cup tournament, there is no doubt he is relishing the big stage. At the age of 33 he looks in superb shape, lean and

Thomas on fast track to green shirt

Gerald Davies on the rise and rise of a young man making his Wales debut in unfamiliar kit

FOR rugby in Wales to stir into vital life and for it once more to swagger to a confident rhythm, a new generation of players needs to emerge. One not so much tarnished by the failures of the recent past but with a clearer need and ambition to restore a national reputation as well as a singular personal, even selfish, desire to perform great deeds.

Earlier this season such a desire was luminously revealed in the words and demeanour of Spencer John, 21, when he won his first cap as a prop for Wales against Scotland. On Tuesday of this week the same yearning and sense of accomplishment manifested themselves in every tic and twitch of Gareth Thomas, who has been selected to play on the left wing for Wales against Japan tomorrow. Thomas will be 21 in July.

Unlike John, who had been on the fringes of senior club rugby for the previous three years, Thomas's entry into the international arena has been swift and sudden. He only began playing for Bridgend last September.

"Everything has come this year," he says. "All I was hoping for was to play a few games for the club. By the end of the season I found I'd played in every game other than the quarter-final of the cup. Then, all of a sudden, here I am now playing for my country."

Yet, early in the season, his name was already on the lips of those who pride themselves on the early recognition of a promising young player. "I was aware of what some people were saying," Thomas explains. "But you don't really want to believe it."

"You can so easily be let down. But I didn't really expect all this. To begin with, I was happy just to be a member of the squad. Then, as soon as I started training, I put the extra effort in and I really, really want to play now."

If this desperate urge is within him now it has not always been so. He was well into his teenage years before starting to play rugby. And, even then, he only did so because his friends were involved.

From Ogmore comprehensive school, he joined the rugby club in Pen-coed, a small village on the outskirts of Bridgend. He played for Wales Youth in 1993, when he was noticed by Gerald Wil-



Thomas makes his debut on the left wing for Wales against Japan tomorrow

liams, the Bridgend coach, who suggested that he join his club.

This move not only changed his aspirations, it changed his shape, too. Now, at 5ft 3in and 15 stone, Thomas is a player of substantial bulk.

"When I arrived at the club I was told I was like a beanpole," he explains. "My ribs showed and there was nothing much of me. I couldn't survive at this level if I didn't have the appropriate strength. I was told."

"Since then Robert Howley, the [Bridgend] scrum half, showed me a programme of weight training and, with him, I followed the course four times a week. Since the start of

the season I've put on a stone and a half in weight."

So time-consuming was all this, and is likely to be in the future, that Thomas gave up his job as a postman and is now a rugby development officer for Bridgend.

There are those who assume that he is merely the kind of player who charges into opponents. But he is deceptive and agile on his feet, able to sidestep off either foot. He prefers the open spaces. In his brief career, he has played on both wings and in the centre.

Chosen on the left wing tomorrow, he prefers to see himself as a midfield player for the practical reason that,

as such, he is likely to have the ball in his hands more often. As he says, he likes to be in the thick of things, not hanging about on the fringes.

His enthusiasm is evident. So, also, is his mature confidence. "I can't wait," he says. "I just want to put on that jersey now."

Tomorrow, however, that jersey will be green. Thomas will have to wait to wear the famous red of Wales. For the third time in the three World Cup tournaments, Wales will play in their second strip. Not that that should deter a player who surely will have other opportunities in the more familiar colours, either on the wing or in the centre.

Omission puts accent on team's status

Pretoria

The Elephants are unhappy. Not the animals, the men. Having only ten supporters in South Africa for the World Cup is bad enough. To make it worse, the men from the weakest team in pool D have the name of their country printed 'wrongly' as often as not.

The programme correctly lists the West African country, whose team is nicknamed the Elephants, as Côte d'Ivoire, though forgetting the circumflex. But most newspapers refer to it as the Ivory Coast, which is now nine years out of date. In 1986, the Ivory Coast changed its name by a vote of Parliament, and with United Nations approval, to Côte d'Ivoire.

So Côte d'Ivoire it shall be from now on. *Bien sûr.*

View ruffles writer's feathers

Accommodation for the several hundred visiting journalists who are staying in this seat of Afrikaner learning ranges from hotels to motels to apartments. *The Times*, we are pleased to report, has a comfortable room at the front of its hotel, while the quarters of *The Daily Telegraph* are at the back overlooking the swimming pool, and TFI, the French television channel, has commandeered the entire sixth floor and turned it into a broadcasting studio, complete with satellite dish.

The man from *The Independent*, however, who almost literally would hardly harm a fly, was far from grunted when, on checking into his motel, he discovered that the view from his window included a dead pigeon.

His heart went out not only to the dead bird but also to what he believed to be the bird's marital companion or relative, if such things are possible in the ornithological world. "From time to time, all the other pigeons go away except for one which comes and stands by its dead friend, looking miserable," he said glumly at lunchtime on Wednesday.

By dinner, there was good news. *The Independent* tucked into a vegetarian meal and said: "They have promised to remove the dead pigeon. I know they've said that before but I think something will happen this time." And he did not mean he expected to be eating pigeon pie.



Irvine leads tartan takeover

Andy Irvine, the former Scotland and British Isles full back, was just one former international who arrived here in time for Scotland's opening match. Gordon Brown, the former second-row forward who will be doing television commentary work for ITV, was another, and John Rutherford, the former stand-off half, a third. Little wonder that the sign inside the front door of the Scotland team hotel in the middle of Pretoria said: "Welcome to Scotland."

Within hours of his arrival, Irvine was to be seen around the hotel wearing dashing shorts and looking remarkably trim for a man recently arrived from Auld Reekie.

Mixing business with pleasure

There was a reason, Irvine, who is here to do some radio work for Radio Five, had flown out club class. "I've been five times round the world and I've always travelled economy before," he explained.

Rutherford's purpose was officially a business trip, carefully contrived to coincide with the three pool D games. He also wanted to be present to see Craig Chalmers sneak past his record as Scotland's most-capped stand-off half in the game against the Côte d'Ivoire in Rustenburg this afternoon.

"In my day, I played about two internationals a year more than my predecessor," Rutherford, who has 42 caps for his country, said. "Now there are so many more games, especially in the year of the World Cup." Scotland will have played at least 12 internationals by the end of 1995.

JOHN HOPKINS

France fancied to show true colours

FROM JOHN HOPKINS IN PRETORIA

FRANCE v Tonga is the baldies versus the little-knowns. From the moment that II of the French backs shaved their heads soon after arriving here, they seemed to indicate they had a sense of purpose, unity and commitment that was not present in the five nations' championship. As for the Tongans, they have taken psychology to the limit, training in secret in Pretoria and keeping the make-up of their team to themselves until the last minute.

If the Tongans feel aggrieved with life, then that would be no surprise. If they could put out a team comprising the best of those who play for the Polynesian islands but also including the best of those who have gone to other countries, it would be a team capable of reaching the semi-finals. A further draining of

their limited resources is to rugby league.

As it is, their inexperienced team will struggle for size, ball-winning capabilities and scrummaging power against France at the famous Loftus Versfeld stadium in Pretoria this evening. Tonga have no one of the size of Olivier Merle and Olivier Brozet, the France locks, and few with the athleticism of Abdelatif Benazzi. What they have is the exuberance of Polynesians and raw strength. As important for France as winning will be doing so without incurring too many injuries.

After comfortable wins over Japan in February, Tonga's standing in world rugby was put cruelly into perspective in March when Canterbury thrashed them 75-5 in the Super 10 series.

Yet the brooding, mercurial French are as well suited to give Tonga a hiding as any team. Pierre Berbizier, the France coach, has chosen his

best available team. For all that France are expected to turn on a display of dazzling running and passing at some stage in this competition, Berbizier is hard-nosed enough to realise the importance of a massive and strong pack and a rock-solid scrum. "You might not win a game with a strong scrum but you can certainly lose it with a

weak one," he said. "The Tongans are a very good defensive side and they are also very physical." A debate in France concerns the merits of the gifted but erratic stand-off half, Christophe Deylaud, compared with the youthful promise of Yann Delagade. The French had no difficulty in choosing the stand-off for this match. With Deylaud still not having recovered from the operation on his thumb, Delagade was the only candidate.

He will not be the kicker, however, and nor will Emile N'Tarnack, who made some of the most inept kicks ever seen in international rugby against Ireland in March. Instead, Berbizier has selected as kicker, Thierry Lacroix, 28, the centre.

"The strength of the French team is to surprise," Lacroix said. "Our flair is in the genes. The question is whether we get the 10 or 15 seconds when the flair can be expressed."

not consider that they have any chance in their other group fixtures against South Africa and Australia next week. "We are primarily here to entertain with our style of play and to be competitive. For us it is not the group of death, but the pool of honour," Radulescu added.

He recently admitted that Romanian rugby had been in steady decline since losing its state-aid on the fall of Nicolai Ceausescu's Communist dictatorship in 1989. "The situation is now desperate," he had said. "Players can't afford rugby boots or balls. There are no facilities or decent pitches — we are going backwards in international rugby."

His Canadian counterpart, Ian Birtwell, regards the encounter as a stepping-stone, nonetheless. "Our objective is

Bevan's handling adds to spectacle

John Hopkins on the performance of the man charged with setting an example for other officials to follow



FOR a few precious minutes yesterday afternoon, Derek Bevan held the world of union, as the song has it, in his hands. Every time Bevan blew his whistle during the opening game of the World Cup, he was setting down a template for the other 26 referees in the competition.

Why did he do it? What was it for? Was it the right decision? Did the players understand his thinking? And did they agree with him?

There was particular interest in the way Bevan refereed the lineout and the rucks and mauls. Would he be over-zealous in his interpretation of the new lineout laws? How long would he allow pile-ups to last before blowing his whistle?

In the northern hemisphere, players have become used to taking one pace out of a lineout and then jumping back in and across to catch the ball. This is not allowed in this competition. At the first lineout, both sets of forwards positioned themselves the statutory distance apart and jumped.

Furthermore, there was no sign of lifting, which has also been outlawed for this competition. The result was clean-cut ball. It may have helped that James Dalton, the South Africa hooker, threw in so ineptly that his team hardly won a lineout for the first 35 minutes. It was a pleasure to see the illegitimate son of rugby, which is what the lineout is known as, working so well.

Bevan was quick to penalise the side that took the ball into a maul if they did not use it — the old use it or lose it

law. He even penalised South Africa for a crooked put-in at a scrum, an offence that many referees ignore these days. And at least twice, he penalised players for tackling rivals in the air.

Perhaps he allowed too much handling of the ball when it was on the ground but his use of the advantage law seemed judicious. Even when every South African thought he should have used it — when the scrum half, Joost van der Westhuizen, broke through and appeared to have scored under the posts in the first half — Bevan was seen on television to have detected a knock-on by a South African hand half a second before.

Offside by the defending side is one of the creeping blights of the modern game and this eyesore was less evident than usual. So was the pernicious habit of jersey tugging and barging. That these areas were refereed so well may explain why such a tense game was so cleanly fought. There was not a hint of a punch being thrown or of a man being raked or stamped on.

In 1991 the tone of the World Cup improved after England's dreary opening game against New Zealand at Twickenham, refereed by Jim Fleming. Bevan has set the tone for this World Cup by his handling of this game and in doing so, has made himself favourite to referee the final on June 24. Organisers, spectators and players could hardly have wished for a better game of rugby with which to start the competition. It was the first of 32, yet it was good enough to have been the last.

All times BST

TODAY

Pool A
Canada v Romania (Port Elizabeth, 7.00pm)
TV: ITV highlights 10.40pm. Eurosport highlights 10.30pm, 7.30pm.

Pool D
Scotland v Ivory Coast (Rustenburg, 3.00pm)
TV: ITV live, highlights 10.40pm. Eurosport live, highlights 10.30pm, 7.30pm.
Radio: Radio Five live.

France v Tonga (5.00pm)
TV: ITV highlights 10.40pm. Eurosport live, highlights 10.30pm, 7.30pm.

YESTERDAY

Pool A
South Africa 27 Australia 18
South Africa: Tries: Hendricks, Stranely. Stranely. Pen: Stranely. 4. Dropped goal: Stranely. Australia: Tries: Kearsley, Lynch. Pen: Lynch. 2.

(at Cape Town)

PROGRAMME

Pool A
P W D L F A Pts
South Africa 1 1 0 0 27 18 3
Australia 0 0 0 1 18 27 0
Canada 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
Romania 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
RESULTS: South Africa 27 Australia 18 (at Cape Town).

REMAINING MATCHES: May 30: South Africa v Romania (Cape Town, 3.00pm). May 31: Australia v Canada (Port Elizabeth, 12.00pm). June 3: Australia v Romania (Stellenbosch, 2.00pm). South Africa v Canada (Port Elizabeth, 7.00pm).

Pool B

MATCHES: Tomorrow: Western Samoa v Italy (East London, 12.00pm).

England v Argentina (Durban, 4.00pm). May 30: Western Samoa v Argentina (East London, 11.30am). May 31: England v Italy (Durban, 4.00pm). Argentina v Italy (East London, 12.00pm). England v Western Samoa (Durban, 7.00pm).

Pool C

MATCHES: Tomorrow: Wales v Japan (Stellenbosch, 2.00pm). New Zealand v Ireland (Johannesburg, 7.00pm). May 31: Ireland v Japan (Stellenbosch, 2.00pm). New Zealand v Wales (Johannesburg, 7.00pm). June 4: New Zealand v Japan (Stellenbosch, 2.00pm). Ireland v Wales (Johannesburg, 4.00pm).

Pool D

MATCHES: Today: Scotland v Ivory Coast (Rustenburg, 3.00pm). France v Tonga (Pretoria, 5.00pm). May 30: France v Ivory Coast (Rustenburg, 7.00pm). Scotland v Tonga (Pretoria, 5.00pm). Scotland v Ivory Coast (Rustenburg, 12.00pm). Scotland v France (Pretoria, 4.00pm).

Top two in each pool qualify for quarter-finals. Two points for a win, one for a draw in pool matches. If teams finish level on points the result against the other side will determine the higher placing; if that was drawn the number of tries scored in pool matches will determine.

Quarter-finals

June 10: pool D winner v pool C runner-up. Durban (12.00pm). pool A winner v pool B runner-up. Johannesburg (2.30pm).

June 11: pool B winner v pool A runner-up. Cape Town (12.00pm). pool C winner v pool D runner-up. Pretoria (2.30pm).

Semi-finals

June 17: Durban winner v Johannesburg winner. Durban (2pm).

June 18: Cape Town winner v Pretoria winner. Cape Town (2pm).

Third-place play-off

June 22: Pretoria (4pm).

Final

June 24: Johannesburg (2pm).

Tickets remain unsold for England matches

THOUSANDS of tickets are still unsold for England's group matches, just 24 hours before their opening game against Argentina tomorrow. When King's Park rugby stadium in Durban opened for business yesterday, 10,000 of the 52,000 seats remained to be filled (Inigo Gilmore writes).

By mid-afternoon, only a few hundred tickets had been snapped up. The game against Italy next week has fared better, however, and officials are confident they will sell the remaining 2,000 tickets.

England's last match against Western Samoa does not look so promising with 15,000 seats available. Unexpectedly, there are 12,000 quarter-final and 7,000 semi-

final tickets still on offer. "It could be the tickets are not selling well because some of the package prices were just too high," Derry Martin, ticket controller at King's Park, said. "All the talk about security problems may have put people off, too."

There has been a rash of telephone inquiries from the United Kingdom over the past few days, it was revealed, and some England supporters were arriving independently to watch the matches. There would not, however, be any free handouts of unsold tickets on match days, a spokeswoman insisted. "We cannot just give them out, even if they were to go to township residents," she said. "We must return all unsold tickets."

THE TIMES

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High-class century by White lifts Yorkshire



White: impressive

By JACK BAILEY
SHEFFIELD (first day of four; Northamptonshire won toss; Yorkshire have scored 229 for seven wickets)

THIS was a rare and memorable day's cricket. Rare, because, for all its lack of easy runs, it kept you enthralled from start to finish; memorable for Craig White's second championship century of the season — the fourth of his career — on a pitch which offered something to good bowlers and rewarded batsmanship based on the old-fashioned principles of

sound footwork, a straight bat, and the ability to punish the bad ball unflinchingly. These qualities shone through White's innings yesterday. He is the only Yorkshire batsman to have scored one championship century this season, let alone two, and the reason for his success was readily apparent. When he reached his century, it was with a straight drive which missed the bowler's wicket by no more than a yard or two. It was an eminently satisfying stroke because it somehow encapsulated the crucial elements of his success. White had batted just over

three hours, had faced 155 balls and had hit a six and 14 fours. Sturdy afterwards, the rains came with White undeterred, the game finely balanced and Yorkshire, having been sent in on a greenish pitch, reasonably placed in this top-of-the-table encounter. For their part, Northamptonshire were left regretting that the one real blip in White's innings — a sharp, awkward, chest-high catch to Capel at slip off Taylor, when he had made 17 — had not been taken.

Had the chance been accepted, there is no knowing what sort of a mess Yorkshire

would have been in. Northamptonshire's seamers were well suited to the early juice in the wicket, the occasional lift of the good length ball and the movement sideways off the pitch. The loose wrist and sly spinning fingers of Kumble offered no respite. By the time White appeared, hard graft and several near misses had carried Yorkshire to 68 for three. Only Byas, that solid craftsman, and the Australian, Bevan, left-handers both, had looked remotely comfortable, but a beauty from Mallerder pierced the defence of Byas and Bevan played on unthink-

ly, attempting to withdraw his bat. The highest partnership of the Yorkshire innings thus far has been the 64 put on between White and Blakely and of these White made 48. Kumble was reduced by White to bowling round the wicket to the right-hander, but he did succeed in removing both Parker and Hartley. As White strode on, he confirmed that, should he recover faith in his damaged intercostal muscles and regain the old slip in his bowling, he will once again be high on the list for a place in the England team.

Radford marks championship debut

Such strikes to end Gatting's hopes of century

By PAT GIBSON

CHELMSFORD (first day of four; Middlesex won toss; Middlesex have scored 329 for six wickets against Essex)

MIKE GATTING kicked the ground in disgust. It was not so much that he had fallen six runs short of what would have been the 85th century of his career and his ninth against Essex but that he had failed to go on and play the leading innings which could have dictated the course of this match.

Significantly, he had become the first victim of spin in what ought to be a classic contest. The Test and County Cricket Board has apparently designated 1995 as the year of the spinner and Essex, with Such and Childs, and Middlesex, with Embury and Tunell, are better equipped than all the other counties in the Britannia Assurance Championship.

In the circumstances, Middlesex were looking for a total of at least 400 when they batted first on a pitch tailored to the new guidelines: tinged with green in the middle and shaved at the ends. If they do not get it — and it is a tall order now — Gooch and Waugh may make them pay a heavy price.

Essex and Middlesex have won the championship 11 times between them in the past 15 years but neither side

approached this game exactly brimming with confidence. Essex had just lost to Sussex by 278 runs and Middlesex had gone down to Lancashire by an innings. Furthermore, Middlesex were without Ramprakash and Fraser, who are on one-day international duty, and had Toby Radford, 23, making his championship debut.

Gatting threw him in at the deep end by asking him to open with Pooley, and he did not sink. Far from it. A former MCC-Lord's Taverners player of the year at under-13, under-15 and under-19 levels, he showed himself to be a well-organised batsman with a sound defence and a pleasant range of strokes once he had acquired the confidence to play them.

He had lost Pooley, expertly picked up by Waugh at second slip off Trent, at 40 but he looked much more like his old self back in the No 3 position. Together they would have put on 146 in 47 overs before Radford, was caught one-handed at backward point by Such off Cousins for 69, compiled in 223 minutes and containing eight fours.

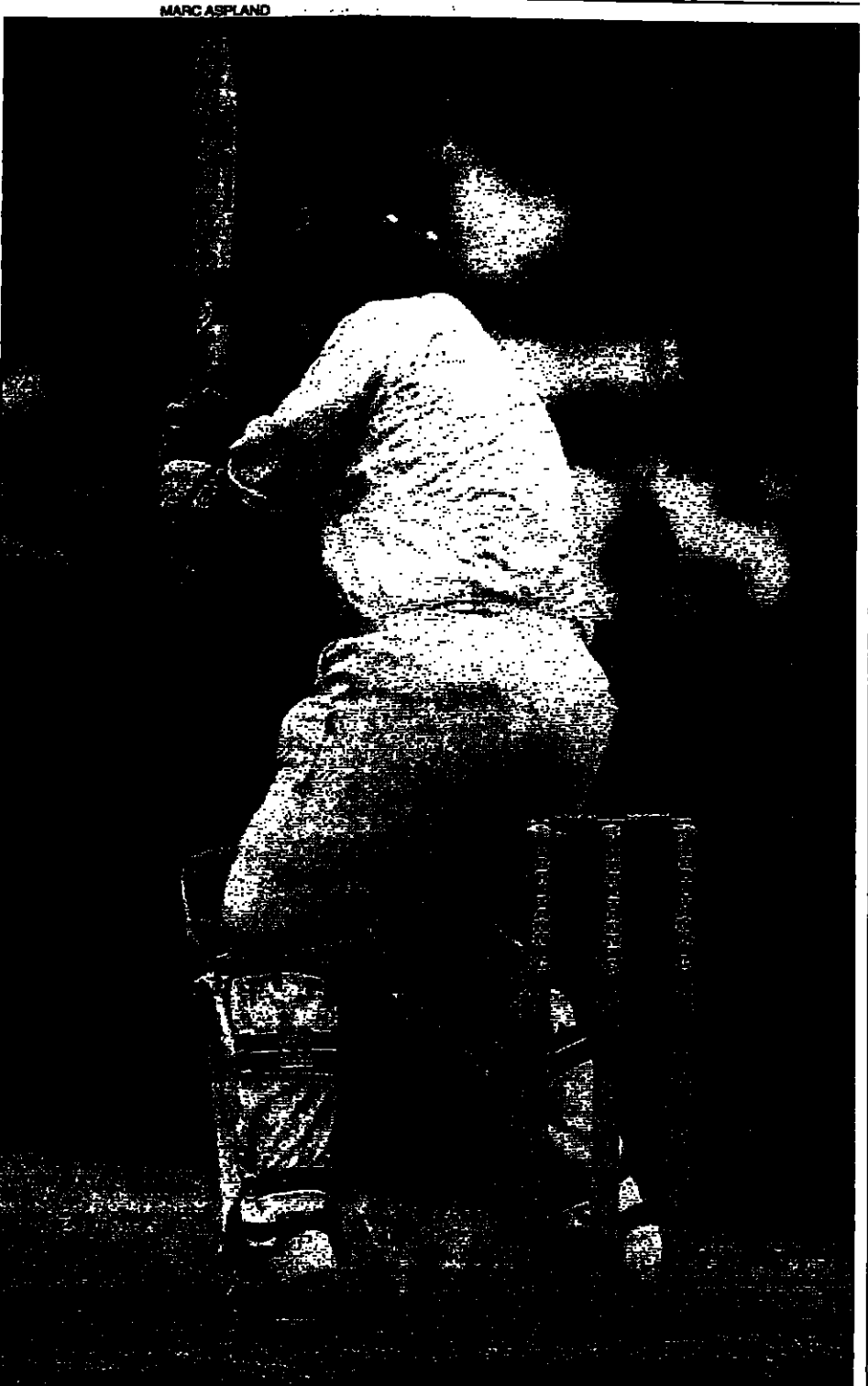
It was an excellent catch by Such, whose fielding has improved out of all recognition, but it was in his more familiar role that he was to strike the

day's most telling blow. Gatting had moved on to 94, his highest score of the season, in just over three hours, hitting a six and 11 fours, when he went to drive the off-spinner and was mortified to see the ball turn and hit the top of his leg stump.

Carr, strangely out of sorts at the moment, had already gone. Leg-before to flout at the beginning of his fourth spell, and Middlesex were not making the best of the conditions when Weekes, who had got away with one chance, hoisted Such to deep square leg.

Brown was more in tune with the requirements. Not for the first time, he showed what a valuable member of the Middlesex side he is by making an admirable 37 before flout came back yet again to have him caught behind. Nash, meanwhile, had been reminding everyone that he was good enough to score a half-century against England at Lord's last year, and Embury needed no reminding how valuable runs were. They had put on 42 by the close but Middlesex could do with a few more yet.

Surrey are to adopt a ticket return service for the second one-day international between England and West Indies at the Oval today. Spectators who cannot stay will be invited to leave their tickets, which will be resold.



Gatting glances a ball from flout to fine leg at Chelmsford yesterday

Determined Bowler grasps tailor-made chance

By MICHAEL HENDERSON

EDGECASTON (first day of four; Warwickshire won toss; Somerset have scored 298 for four wickets against Warwickshire)

THIS was a dull, grinding, attritional day and Somerset will not give a hoot. Deprived by injury of five players, including their captain, wicketkeeper and both new-ball bowlers, they ended it in a favourable position after being instructed to bat on a green pitch in cool, breezy conditions that assisted swing bowling.

In short it was a day made for Peter Bowler, who did not disappoint. He

batted the better part of it, joining Lathwell in the eleven over when Trescott was caught behind, and staying to complete his second century for the county in the final hour as Holloway, once of Warwickshire, helped him to add 123 for the fifth wicket.

Bowler's hundred came from 253 balls and included a dozen boundaries. It was an innings notable for its solidity and quiet determination, the qualities Somerset sought when they signed him from Derbyshire. By holding the innings together, and going on to complete a century, he offered a rebuke to Lathwell, who was back in the shed before lunch after a promising beginning.

Bowler should not have lasted the day. In the penultimate over, he got his signals badly crossed with Holloway and survived only because Smith, who returned the ball from mid-wicket, and Piper, who broke the stumps without it, contrived a peculiar reprieve. It was not really Warwickshire's day.

Regrettably, when Bowler reached his century (and, for the record, his fifty) he chose to acknowledge only his own team-mates. It was precisely the kind of selfish gesture, all too common, which should be punished, and never is. On this ground, where the players crouch behind windows in the dungeon they call the pavilion, rendering them almost invisible, it

was an absurd dumb show. He was not the only dumb cricketer out there. It was 5.47 before Davis, the left-arm spinner, was invited to bowl his first over, the 96th of the innings. Bowler was 107 by then. Holloway 31, and their stand was one run short of 100. Reeve was clearly too busy bowling himself to remember he had picked Davis, who got a sarcastic cheer when he took the ball.

Davis is not the greatest 'ripper' in the world but he offered a different line of attack. Until that point the bowling had been carried by four right-armers at a pace no sharper than medium, and Smith, the tidy off-spinner. The champions need Donald and Munton back quickly.

Reeve thought he had Bowler caught at the wicket when the batsman had made 11. Thereafter it was a day of unremitting toil for Warwickshire as he progressed to 27 by lunch, 74 by tea and 121 by stumps. Bowler is not easy on the eye, lacking grace and range of stroke, but he has long since proved his effectiveness in county cricket.

Lathwell, alas, had gone in the second hour of play, leg-before to Two as he shuffled across his stumps. He played the stroke of the day when he pulled Small for six and continues to titillate. With a few ounces of Bowler's fortune he could still go a good deal further than seems likely.

Kent evoke golden days

By IVO TENNANT

TUNBRIDGE WELLS (second day of four; Glamorgan, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 214 runs behind Kent)

CAST the mind back 20 or more years and it is possible to evoke a loose-limbed Oriental in partnership with a stocky Man of Kent. One makes a century with a sure, felicitous touch and the other thumps

cover drives and square cuts through the in-field to rustlings of approval from his own kind.

There is always a sense of a time warp about the Nevill, a cricket ground in repose. At first glance yesterday Asif Iqbal and Alan Eastham were at the crease, as they so often were two decades ago. Both of them would have had a keen appreciation of the partnership that unfolded.

Aravinda de Silva put on 151 in 49 overs with Mark Smith, who, take away his white helmet, bears an uncanny resemblance to his father. The pitch was flat, the bowling lacking in penetration. Kent, 314 for three at one point in excess of 400 or even 500.

Instead, they lost their last five wickets for 27 and in turn struggled to contain Glamorgan in the final session. Morgan, his back not troubling him for the time being, put on an unbroken 153 with Dale. The two, had caused cause for concern. This is one pitch, and indeed one match, that will last for four days.

So their partnership has already almost exceeded that of de Silva and Eastham, although not for virtuosity, Morris reckoned earlier in the day that he could counter de

Silva's leg-side play, placing one fielder slightly in front of square, another at mid-wicket and a third at wide mid-on. But the Sri Lankan's placement was still highly effective.

His century, his second for Kent, came with a four off Kendrick through that mid-wicket region. There were 23 in all before he was leg-before to Anthony looking to improve something further on the leg side. He departed flicking his pad with his bat in annoyance and the fun went out of the innings with him.

Eastham likewise was leg-before, swinging across the line at Watkin, and the last five wickets went swiftly. Anthony, who all too easily can give the appearance of the bored hired hand, finished with five for 70, his best figures for Glamorgan. He is, lest we forget, on stand-by for West Indies should injuries or illness befall one of their fast bowlers.

This will be more of a spinner's pitch today and tomorrow, as Patel illustrated with one ball that turned and jumped out of the rough. By then, however, Glamorgan, in sixth place in the championship table, three points behind Kent, had put together their best opening stand of the season.

Terry puts Sussex to sword

By GEOFFREY WHEELER

HAMPSHIRE cast aside early-season batting frailties in the grand manner yesterday. Paul Terry and Robin Smith both completing centuries against Sussex in the course of their third-wicket partnership of 259 in 144 overs at Portsmouth.

Having been dismissed for less than 200 in the first innings of their three previous championship games, Hampshire began the match without a batting point or a batsman in form, which must have encouraged Ian Salisbury, who was captaining Sussex for the first time.

But his hopes of engineering another collapse were soon dashed. Terry batted throughout the day for his unbeaten 162 out of 356 for three and has already hit 17 fours and a six. Smith, who knows he must score heavily to reclaim his England place, showed much of his old authority and hit 15 boundaries in his 120 before falling to Franklyn Stephenson.

Manoj Prabhakar and Javagal Srinath, who share the new ball for India following the retirement of Kapil Dev, may not be the most threatening opening attack in Test cricket, but they are adapting readily to the county game.

Prabhakar, who has already scored some useful runs for Durham, dismissed the first six Leicestershire batsmen at Grace Road yesterday without help from his supporting cast. Three went leg before and three bowled, including James Whitaker who repaired early damage with a typically bold innings of 91 made from 122 balls.

Leicestershire, struggling at 249 for seven, were grateful to those determined characters, Gordon Parsons and David Mills, for a partnership of 98 for the eighth wicket. But Prabhakar had the last word, having Mills caught behind for 40 to end the day with seven for 55, a career best.



Smith: back to form

Srinath, recommended to Gloucestershire by Courtney Walsh, his predecessor as the county's overseas player, has already won two gold awards during the side's unexpected advance to the quarter-finals of the Benson and Hedges Cup. He has been equally niggardly in the four-day game and yesterday took four for 34 in 23 overs as Worcestershire were dismissed for 172 at Archdeacon Meadow, Gloucester.

Left-arm Mike Smith continued his good start to the season with four for 68 while Mark Alleyne, bowling with unusual economy, lent stout support. With Dean Hodgson dropping anchor, Gloucestershire finished handsily placed at 122 for two.

Another overseas bowler, New Zealand's Chris Cairns, made Lancashire, work hard to reach 277 for eight against Nottinghamshire at Liverpool. Cairns, who has been handicapped by a strained side in recent weeks, took four for 43 in his 20 overs. Lancashire, seeking their fourth successive victory, were going well until Cairns ended a second-wicket partnership between Steve Titchard and John Crawley, worth 88, by dismissing them in successive overs.

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Britannia Assurance county championship Essex v Middlesex CHELMSFORD (first day of four; Middlesex won toss; Middlesex have scored 329 for six wickets against Essex) MIDDLESEX: First Innings T A Radford c Such b Cousins 59 J C Pooley c Waugh b Ryan 19 W W Gooch b Such 17 J D Carr bow b Ryan 14 P N Weston c Cousins b Such 14 K R Brown c Radford b Iltis 37 D J Nash not out 23 D E Embury not out 21 Extras (b 5, lb 9, w 1, nb 18) 28 Total (8 wickets, 111 overs) 329 R L Johnson, M A Fotherham and P C R Tufnell to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-40, 2-186, 3-202, 4-202, 5-265, 6-287 BOWLING: Essex 29-9-44-2; Cousins 23-4-69-1; Ryan 17-5-33-1; Such 29-7-57-2; Childs 12-0-56-0 SUSSEX: G A Gooch, P J Richardson, M E Waugh, N Hussain, J B Laws, R C Iram, J R Hoggins, M C Goss, P M Such, D M Cousins, J H Chiles Bonus points: Essex 2 Middlesex 3 Umpires: B Dudson and B Leadbeter	
Gloucestershire v Worcestershire GLOUCESTER (first day of four; Gloucestershire won toss; Gloucestershire, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 50 runs behind Worcestershire) WORCESTERSHIRE: First Innings W P C Weston c Lynch b Smith 14 V S Duns c Ryan b Smith 14 T M Moody bow b Smith 2 G R Haynes bow b Aloysius 0 J A Leachman c Russell b Smith 10 S J Rhodes bow b Smith 34 S R Lampard b Aloysius 3 J Newport not out 22 R K Langworthy c Russell b Smith 4 N V Radford bow b Smith 12 Thomas b Smith 1 Extras (b 6, lb 6, w 4) 16 Total (7 wickets, 101 overs) 172 FALL OF WICKETS: 1-34, 2-36, 3-36, 4-75, 5-107, 6-122, 7-142, 8-146, 9-163 BOWLING: Smith 21-9-25-4; Smith 21-6-36-1; Aloysius 25-16-35-2; Dawson 6-1-19-1; Ball 12-1-0-0 GLOUCESTERSHIRE: First Innings A J Wright c Rhodes b Radford 29 G D Hodgson not out 35 J A Lynch c Weston b Langworthy 40 R I Dawson not out 4 Extras (b 1, w 1, nb 12) 14 Total (6 wickets, 35 overs) 122 M W Alleyne, A Symcox, "R C Russell, J Smith, M C Goss, M Davies and A M Smith to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-36, 2-110, 3-110 BOWLING: Radford 7-2-18-1; Haynes 5-1-21-0; Thomas 2-0-20-0; Newport 5-1-25-0; Lampard 10-35-0; Langworthy 5-1-5-1 Bonus points: Gloucestershire 4 Worcestershire 0 Umpires: J W Holder and B J Meyer	
Hampshire v Sussex PORTSMOUTH (first day of four; Hampshire won toss; Hampshire have scored 356 for three wickets against Sussex) HAMPSHIRE: First Innings R S M Morris c Moores b Giddons 23 V P Terry not out 182 J P Stephenson bow b Jarvis 152 R A Smith c Jarvis b Stephenson 120 M Weller not out 15 Extras (b 8, lb 5, w 1, nb 14) 28 Total (3 wickets, 110 overs) 356 G W White, "M C J Nicholas, T A Noyes, H H Street, C A Connor and J N Bodd to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-58, 2-70, 3-269 BOWLING: Stephenson 17-6-52-1; Jarvis 18-1-51-0; Morris 20-4-57-0; Giddons 16-2-50-1; Salisbury 20-2-72-0; Newell 15-3-35-0; Atkey 3-1-4-0 SUSSEX: C W Alleyne, J W Hall, M Newell, J J Leatham, K Goodfield, P J Morris, D Stephenson, "D K Salisbury, P W Jarvis, E S Giddons, E E Hemmings Bonus points: Hampshire 4 Sussex 1 Umpires: V A Holder and P B Wright	
Lancashire v Nottinghamshire LIVERPOOL (first day of four; Lancashire won toss; Lancashire have scored 277 for eight wickets against Nottinghamshire) LANCASHIRE: First Innings J E R Gatten b Cairns 9 S P Richardson c Evans b Cairns 57 P Coney bow b Cairns 49 N J Speak bow b Cairns 50 G D Lloyd bow b Evans 15 M Weller bow b Cairns 15 Wadman c Archer b Allford 47 I D Austin bow b Pick 2 W K Hogg not out 0 G Chappell not out 0 Extras (b 8, w 1, lb 14) 22 Total (8 wickets, 108 overs) 277 G Keedy to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-57, 2-127, 3-128, 4-162, 5-160, 6-209, 7-273, 8-273 Bowling: Cairns 20-3-43-0; Pick 16-7-39-1; Evans 24-5-25-0; Allford 34-8-28-1; Harrison 20-49-0 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: M P Dawson, "R T Robinson, G F Archer, P J Johnson, C Cairns, J E Henderson, R A Pick, J A Abbott Bonus points: Lancashire 2 Nottinghamshire 0 Umpires: G J Burgess and K E Palmer	
Leicestershire v Durham LEICESTER (first day of four; Leicestershire won toss; Leicestershire have scored 348 for eight wickets against Durham) LEICESTERSHIRE: First Innings D J Moody bow b Prabhakar 0 "N E Brown bow b Prabhakar 41 W J Cronin b Prabhakar 8 V Weller b Prabhakar 56 P F Smith bow b Prabhakar 38 P A Nash bow b Prabhakar 40 G J Parsons not out 40 D J Mills c Lignwood b Prabhakar 40 A R K Person not out 1	
Warwickshire v Somerset EDGECASTON (first day of four; Warwickshire won toss; Somerset have scored 298 for four wickets against Warwickshire) SOMERSET: First Innings M N Latham bow b Twiss 47 M E Trescott c Piper b Small 14 M D Bowler not out 32 R J Harrison bow b Twiss 38 K A Parsons c Piper b Small 21 P C I. Halliwell not out 38 Extras (b 5, lb 5, w 1, nb 12) 23 Total (4 wickets, 110 overs) 298 G D Rose, J C Hogg, J D Kerr, Mustapha Ahmed and J H Hump to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-36, 2-76, 3-137, 4-175 BOWLING: Small 23-5-59-2; Brown 25-5-85-1; Rose 25-7-53-0; Twiss 19-5-49-1; Smith 14-4-22-0; Davis 4-1-10-0 WARWICKSHIRE: A J Miles, N V Knight, Wadman, T L Penney, R C Iram, S D Thomas, D R Brown, R J Piper, N M K Smith, G C Small, R P Davis Bonus points: Warwickshire 1 Somerset 2 Umpires: J H Harris and K J Lyons	
Yorkshire v Northants SHEFFIELD (first day of four; Northamptonshire won toss; Yorkshire have scored 229 for seven wickets against Northamptonshire) YORKSHIRE: First Innings A McGahey c Latham b Twiss 12 M P Vaughan c Wadman b Capel 25 "D Byas b Mallerder 31 M G Bevan b Capel 32 C White not out 106 R J Blakely c Capel b Curran 16 B Paine bow b Curran 4 P J Hartley bow b Kumble 4 D J Simpson not out 9 Extras (b 4, lb 7, w 1, nb 9) 29 Total (7 wickets, 87.2 overs) 229 S M Mithun and M A Robinson to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-34, 2-36, 3-68, 4-103, 5-107, 6-182, 7-188 BOWLING: Taylor 21-2-78-1; Mallerder 17-4-32-1; Capel 15-8-25-2; Kumble 22-5-55-2; Curran 12-2-21-0 NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: A Fordham, R R Warren, R J Blakely, T C Watson, T A Smith, M G Bevan, M A Mallerder, J P Taylor, A Kumble, N A Mallerder, J P Taylor Bonus points: Yorkshire 1 Northamptonshire 3 Umpires: T E Jesty and A G T Whitehead	
Kent v Glamorgan TUNBRIDGE WELLS (second day of four; Glamorgan, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 214 runs behind Kent) KENT: First Innings T R Wood not out 36 "M R Brown c Croft b Dale 13 N R Taylor retired hurt 13 P A de Silva bow b Anthony 135 M Weller c Meston b Anthony 13 M A Eastham bow b Wadman 58 T S M Patel not out 51 M J McCusker c and b Anthony 21 D W Headley c and b Anthony 21 A P Iqbal c and b Anthony 2 Extras (b 1, w 1, nb 4) 8 Total (11 wickets, 104 overs) 389 FALL OF WICKETS: 1-58, 2-148, 3-163, 4-214, 5-242, 6-350, 7-361, 8-361, 9-361 BOWLING: Wadman 19-9-37-1; MacBroom 20-7-50-0; Weller 12-0-24-0; Headley 7-1-57-0; Richards 10-0-28-1; Meston 11-0-27-0; Randall 1-0-0-0; Sutcliffe 3-0-13-0 Glamorgan: First Innings A Dale not out 74 "H Morris not out 12 Extras (b 2, lb 4, w 1, nb 2) 9 Total (no wicket, 43 overs) 155 D L Kemp, M P Maynard, P A Collier, R D B Croft, H A G Anthony, M M Kendrick, S D Thomas, T C P Meston and S L Wadman to bat. BOWLING: McCusker 9-1-39-0; Iqbal 9-0-45-0; Headley 10-1-27-0; Eastham 5-1-15-0; Patel 7-2-17-0; deSilva 3-0-13-0 Bonus points: Kent 4 Glamorgan 4 Umpires: D J Consett and A A Jones	
University match Oxford University v Derbyshire THE PARKS (first day of three; Derbyshire won toss; Oxford University, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 246 runs behind Derbyshire) DERBYSHIRE: First Innings T J G O'Connell c Jermolov b Mether 17 W A Dunsour not out 115 K M Wadman c Sutcliffe b Ricketts 115 N M Kiddle not out 2 Extras (b 1, lb 2) 2 Total (2 wickets, 21 overs) 261 "K J Bennett, C J Adams, A Pickett, M E Cresser, A J Harris, A Richardson and A W Cotten to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-48, 2-251 BOWLING: Mether 19-9-37-1; MacBroom 20-7-50-0; Weller 12-0-24-0; Headley 7-1-57-0; Richards 10-0-28-1; Meston 11-0-27-0; Randall 1-0-0-0; Sutcliffe 3-0-13-0 OXFORD UNIVERSITY: First Innings C M Gooch c Robinson b Richardson 2 J J Smith bow b Richardson 4 J M E D. Jermolov not out 15 "G J Macmillan, A C Ridley, W S Kendall, J Wadman, A D MacBroom, J D Ricketts and V P Mether to bat. FALL OF WICKETS: 1-4, 2-11 BOWLING: Harris 3-1-4-0; Richardson 3-1-9-2 Umpires: J H Hampshire and M K Reed	

FORTHCOMING COMPANY GOLF DAYS		
DATE	COMPANY	VENUE
May 25	Daily Motor Co Ltd	Ballochmyle 30
May 30	Messon & Glennie	Cruden Bay 60
May 31	Versatile Fittings (BFN)	Menmore G & C 30
May 31	Ernst & Young	Mosley 35
June 1	W & J Burness WS	Dunfermline 24
June 1	Chantwell Land Plo	Porters Park 45
June 2	Critical Care Appeal	Camberley Heath 120
June 2	Salford Limited	Oswestry 36

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Schofield counters critics with Volvo's help

By MSL WEBB

KEN SCHOFIELD, executive director of the PGA European Tour, has been an embattled man recently, the target by inference of criticism from leading players about their fears for the future of European men's professional golf. Yesterday the silence from the big-name dissidents was deafening as Schofield revealed an extension of a multi-million-pound investment by the tour's principal sponsor.

The talk from such luminaries as Severiano Ballesteros, Nick Faldo and José María Olazábal has smacked of a tour in crisis. They have accused Schofield and his staff of sacrificing quality for quantity in the tournament pro-

gramme: there have been accusations that a "comfort zone" is preventing the emergence of young players to take over when the present generation of great European performers has gone.

Yet here was Schofield rising to his feet to announce that Volvo, the tour's title sponsor since 1988, is to continue its backing for a further four years from 1996 at a cost of £20 million. There are members of dozens of sports' ruling bodies in Europe who would give their eye-teeth to be enmeshed in that sort of crisis.

It was somehow appropriate that Schofield should make his announcement at Wentworth, where the Volvo PGA championship, the tour's flagship event, starts today. The

tour, which wanted to revert to operation under its own name. It means that Volvo will concentrate its efforts on the promotion of four tournaments and working in four other areas — the operation of the order of merit, the bonus pool paid out to the season's most successful players, a courtesy car programme at tournaments and backing for the televising of tour events.

Schofield had a long talk with Ballesteros, Olazábal, Faldo and Ian Woosnam on Wednesday, and Faldo, for one, was anxious to give the meeting his seal of approval. "Ken's doing a great job," he said. "Things are going forward nicely. My main concern has been the quality of the courses we play on, and I

think everything is being done to improve that. "I think sometimes everybody wants things to happen quicker than they can. It takes time; we must be patient. We need to make the courses better to help more great young golfers to come through. This tour has been through a very difficult time, but I think the future is good."

Faldo, already the only man to win this event four times, goes into the tournament as favourite. There is nothing new in that. It is a burden which he is saddled just about every time he picks up a club in anger, especially in Europe. However, having spent almost five months playing on the glass-fast greens in the United States, he is going to

have to make a bigger adjustment than most of his opponents. Putting surfaces in England at this time of year are hardly renowned for their stickiness. In comparative terms, he will think he is putting on a pudding.

He will fly straight back to the United States after this tournament to play in the Memorial at Muirfield Village, then goes on a reconnaissance mission to Shinnecock Hills, venue for the US Open next month. How long he stays there will depend on how he plays in the Memorial. "If I was to win it, it might mean some serious fishing," he said, and smiled. Yes, he smiled. America has changed Faldo — it is a change, beyond dispute, for the better.

Alesi's Ferrari posts early warning of intent in first qualifying session

Hill sees pitfalls of Monaco brought sharply into focus

FROM OLIVER HOLT IN MONTE CARLO

THE main television screen in the bank of 12 that confronted Damon Hill yesterday afternoon showed a picture of the Monte Carlo Casino. His gaze flitted across it to images less grand and imposing. Walls of figures competed with graphs and charts detailing the performance of his Williams-Renault.

Outside his garage, the chaos that surrounds the showpiece of the Formula One season was in full swing. Trucks tried to force their way in and out of the pit lane and mechanics trundled equipment towards the paddock beneath the grandstands as the public flooded in. In the harbour, yachts moved gently back to their berths.

Still Hill pored over the screens, talking with his Renault engineers, trying to see where he could pick up extra fractions of a second to improve the fourth place he earned in the first qualifying session for the Monaco Grand Prix on Sunday. Eventually, he dragged himself away to return to his motor-home.

It may be the most glamorous race in the calendar, the one that offers the most distractions, the bars, the galas, the history. But it also demands the highest levels of concentration from the drivers. As landmarks such as the Loews Hotel and Casino Square flash past in the blink of an eye, it induces a kind of hypnosis in the drivers when they can least afford it.

Indeed, it seemed to affect Hill for a while yesterday. He was eighth for much of the qualifying session and, when it rained midway through, it seemed he would have to suffer in that position until the second qualifying session tomorrow. He posted his quickest time with a few minutes

remaining, however, and was happy to take fourth place going into today's race day.

"You can settle into a very distinct rhythm on this circuit," Hill said. "It seems like it is right-left, right-left, all the time. It becomes hypnotic, it is almost mesmerising, but you cannot allow your concentration to waver for a moment because there is so little margin for error."

Hill's clear early-season advantage has disappeared now, eaten away by Jean Alesi and Michael Schumacher. Alesi led after the first session, driving close to his best again and finishing nearly 0.4sec ahead of the world champion as Ferrari's renaissance continued. But he dared not contemplate a maiden victory on Sunday.

"I'm really well prepared for

Monaco," Alesi said. "My car is well-balanced and easy to drive and so I was able to do a good time. But it is too early to think about victory. We will have to make progress on Saturday."

David Coulthard, Hill's team-mate, struggled on his first outing at Monaco, lagging behind the front-runners as he tried to learn the track.

He, too, sought to describe the special fears it holds. "When you are learning the track," he said, "you cannot afford to push it too hard because, if you lose control, there is no way of bringing it back. There is no margin for error because the barriers are right on top of you and, when you have that at the back of your mind, it does not improve your confidence. But I am gradually getting up to speed."

If anybody fell victim to the hypnotic effect Hill described, however, it may have been Mark Blundell. Nigel Mansell's replacement at McLaren. After an impressive first morning in the car, Blundell rose to eighth in the standings before losing control on the hill that slopes past the Tip Top Bar, which Graham Hill and his colleagues used to frequent in the halcyon days of grand prix racing.

The McLaren-Mercedes twinned to the right and Blundell smashed into the barriers at 100mph. He emerged unscathed. "I am slightly baffled by what happened," he said. "But perhaps I was just a bit too eager on fresh tyres."

His team-mate, Mika Häkkinen, endeavoured to play down Mansell's assessment of a fortnight ago that the car was undrivable. "Of course it's not," he said. "If it was undrivable, I would be in last position — and I am fifth."



Hill looks hot and bothered after practice yesterday for the Monaco Grand Prix

Palace stung by rejection

By NICHOLAS HARLING

CRYSTAL Palace are threatening to sue the Basketball League after having a third successive application for promotion to the Budweiser League rejected for what they claim are "spurious reasons".

Alton Byrd, who coached Palace — once Britain's leading club — to the first division title and a Wembley play-off triumph in his first season, was dismayed to learn this week that his team did not merit improved status.

Coventry Crusaders, the runners-up, and third-placed Warr Rebels were also refused but it was the league's decision to exclude Palace once more

that may lead to repercussions. Besides their ability on court, Mike Smith, the league's chief executive, stressed that clubs should have impressive facilities, sponsorship potential, a solid financial structure and healthy attendances to satisfy requirements.

Palace, who dropped out of the league of their own accord four years ago but continued to stage the annual World Invitation Club Championships in the National Sports Centre, admit that they could improve in the last two aspects and say they would if they were granted admittance.

"We will do whatever it takes to get this decision reversed," Terry Doherty, the Palace director, said yesterday. "If that means legal action, so be it."

England are clearly hoping for something better from John Amaechi in the later stages of the European championships qualifying round.

The 6ft 9in Manchester-born forward, whose international debut against Ireland last Friday yielded just eight points, followed up with only five points more in the 96-57 defeat of Wales in Birmingham on Wednesday.

Amaechi, a product of Penn State University, has yet to show why he is rated one of the brightest prospects in the American college game. "I know that John didn't produce anything outstanding," Laszlo Nemeth, the England coach, admitted. "But it's very difficult for him, as he has only just joined the team. He has had to adjust."

Watched by the disgruntled Karl Brown, who was omitted from the team at the last minute after having been told he was playing, Amaechi was out-scored by seven of his team-mates, led by the captain, Peter Scandebury, with 22 points.

With England facing tougher games against Georgia, tonight, Denmark, tomorrow, and the group A favourites, Poland, on Sunday, Amaechi would do well to improve if they are to qualify for the semi-final round by finishing in the top three.

Dudman turns tide for Indio

By JOHN WATSON

INDIO, the Honourable Lucas White's quartet, defeated the Australian team, Geebung (see 4), from the Guards Club, by seven goals to 4½ as the tournament for the Cowdrey Park Club's Dollar Cup went into the semi-final phase on the River ground at Midhurst yesterday.

The holders of the trophy looked over-confident during the first couple of chukkas, and the second half of a furiously-fought encounter started with Geebung 2½-2 ahead. But Indio were not to be subdued. Led by the All-England seven-goal, Alan Kent, playing hand-in-glove with his No 2, Jonny Wade, they enjoyed a fine third chukka, one of their goals going to Richard Dudman, who was substituting at No 1 with great credit, for Lucas White.

Geebung received a further setback towards the end of the third chukka when their No 1 and patron, Ric Stowe, sustained an injury. After treatment, he was able to continue, however.

Geebung's English No 3, Andrew Hine, showed skilful co-operation with Brett Kieley at No 2, but they could not resist the onslaught of Kent and Wade.

INDIO: 1, R. Dudman (1); 2, J. Wade (4); 3, A. Kent (7); 4, B. Kent (1); 5, A. Kent (1); 6, A. Kent (1); 7, A. Kent (1); 8, A. Kent (1); 9, A. Kent (1); 10, A. Kent (1); 11, A. Kent (1); 12, A. Kent (1); 13, A. Kent (1); 14, A. Kent (1); 15, A. Kent (1); 16, A. Kent (1); 17, A. Kent (1); 18, A. Kent (1); 19, A. Kent (1); 20, A. Kent (1); 21, A. Kent (1); 22, A. Kent (1); 23, A. Kent (1); 24, A. Kent (1); 25, A. Kent (1); 26, A. Kent (1); 27, A. Kent (1); 28, A. Kent (1); 29, A. Kent (1); 30, A. Kent (1); 31, A. Kent (1); 32, A. Kent (1); 33, A. Kent (1); 34, A. Kent (1); 35, A. Kent (1); 36, A. Kent (1); 37, A. Kent (1); 38, A. Kent (1); 39, A. Kent (1); 40, A. Kent (1); 41, A. Kent (1); 42, A. Kent (1); 43, A. Kent (1); 44, A. Kent (1); 45, A. Kent (1); 46, A. Kent (1); 47, A. Kent (1); 48, A. Kent (1); 49, A. Kent (1); 50, A. Kent (1); 51, A. Kent (1); 52, A. Kent (1); 53, A. Kent (1); 54, A. Kent (1); 55, A. Kent (1); 56, A. Kent (1); 57, A. Kent (1); 58, A. Kent (1); 59, A. 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FRIDAY MAY 26 1995

Hosts outplay holders in opening match to state World Cup credentials

South Africa throw down gauntlet

South Africa 27
Australia 18FROM DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT
IN CAPE TOWN

FROM first to last this was South Africa's day and, from the playing point of view, the success of the 1995 World Cup is assured. From the first notes of the joyful opening ceremony at the historic Newlands ground here to the final outpouring of triumph and relief that the 1991 champions had been smashed aside, a nation rejoiced.

The South Africa selectors, criticised for their choices in midfield and the front row, were completely vindicated. In neither area did the team falter, leaving Joel Stransky to dominate the scoreboard on his home ground with a return of 22 points. The line now runs straight from the coast to the rarefied atmosphere of Transvaal on June 24, when all South Africa will anticipate its heroes contesting the World Cup final.

For Australia, the road back from what was an utterly unexpected reverse will be rocky. The team whose preparations seemed so confident and assured, whose experience was unequalled and whose stride so measured, was left looking ragged and threadbare. The inaccuracy of Australia's play must have appalled Bob Dwyer, their coach, who must now reassemble his team to take them past the likely hurdles of England and New Zealand.

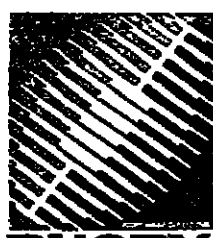
That Australia will hit back in their pool A games against Canada and Romania is not in doubt, but their flat-ball game was completely unravelled by a team playing, apparently, on pure adrenalin. South Africa, admirably disciplined and tactically alert, looked up the midfield on all but one occasion and, given an ounce more luck, might have scored three more tries to create the semblance of a rout.

Their margin of success was the more astounding because they hardly won a line-out. Their first success in that vital phase came after 35 minutes, through the influential Strauli, and, by my count,

they won only five balls to Australia's 22. Yet, by preying on Grogan and setting both scrum half and flanker at Lynagh, they closed down space for the dangerous Australian back division.

If one moment crystallised the tactical triumph of South Africa and their coach, Kitch Christie, it came when Small escaped near halfway, and van der Westhuizen was one of six South Africans in support against two Australians. That the scrum half knocked on seconds after his team had established a 14-13 lead going into the interval was neither here nor there, given the perception of his all-round game.

South Africa could not have anticipated how off-key their opponents would be: that so experienced a pivot as Lynagh



Victory delight 1
Diary 20
Bevan's example 43
Confident Scotland 43

could drop out so badly, that he could miss the softest of touches, or that Pini's inability to find touch would prove so costly. Or, indeed, that Campese would be the player to allow South Africa their first sniff of victory, when he let Hendriks scamper clear for his team's first try.

It was the game, and the result, that the tournament required — not a foot out of place, not a penalty for foul play, just hard, pure rugby, played with power and pace.

The ritual exchange of penalties that opened the game allowed early nerves to settle and, though Stransky edged his side ahead, Australia flattered to deceive by upping the pace and creating, for the only time in the game, the fluid continuity that took Lynagh over for his try.

As he did throughout the game, Gavin played the vital role in that score, but South Africa proved better at winning back possession from restarts. Joubert, Dalton and Small linked on the right, and Small did superbly well to cross from his own to the opposite wing so that, when rucked ball arrived, he made the extra man, and Hendriks went stepping out of Campese's apology for a tackle.

The try gave South Africa a lead they were not to lose, and the sight of Campese, seconds later, knocking on under no pressure, gave them added heart. Earlier in the week, Stransky had suggested that the wind at refurbished Newlands was now more fluky, but that did not stop the Western Province stand-off half, 27, kicking a fourth penalty and dropping a close-range goal to add to his team's self-belief.

Twice, Herbert broke clear, but invariably Australia suffered the indignity of turned-over ball against the curtain provided by an aggressive midfield and a powerful back row. That Australia survived immense pressure in the third quarter was to their credit, but just when they believed they were still in the match, van der Westhuizen and Strauli combined from a five-metre scrum to send Stransky stepping inside and over the line for the decisive try.

There was time for the winning of the match, but Australia could find neither the wit nor the pace to do so. Fifteen minutes after the excellent Derek Bevan blew his whistle, a banner stretched across the road to D F Malan airport: "We tied your kangaroo down sport", it read. "Now for the rest."

SCORES: South Africa: Tries: Hendriks, Stransky, Conventer; Penalties: Stransky (4). Dropped goal: Stransky. Australia: Tries: Lynagh, Kearns; Conventer; Penalties: Lynagh. Penalty goals: Lynagh (2).

SOUTH AFRICA: A J Joubert (Natal), J T Small (Natal), J C Mudge (Transvaal), H P le Roux (Transvaal), P Hendriks (Transvaal), J T Stransky (Western Province), J H van der Westhuizen (Northern Transvaal), P du Randt (Orange Free State), J Dalton (Transvaal), S Swart (Transvaal), J F Pienaar (Transvaal), captain, M G Andrews (Natal), J J Strydom (Transvaal), R B Kruger (Northern Transvaal), R A W Strauss (Transvaal), G Page (Western Province) replaced Smit, 60 min.

AUSTRALIA: M Pini (Queensland), D I Campese (New South Wales), D J Herbert (Queensland), J B Little (Queensland), D P Smith (Queensland), M P Lynagh (Queensland), captain, G M Grogan (ACT), D J Crowley (Queensland), P N Kearns (New South Wales), E J A McKenzie (New South Wales), V Oshangwa (New South Wales), R J McCall (Queensland), A Bales (Queensland), D Wilson (Queensland), B T Gavin (New South Wales). Referee: W D Bevan (Wales).



Hendriks, the South Africa wing, acclaims the try he scored to give his team a narrow half-time lead yesterday

Springboks are masters of fate

David Miller praises a stirring victory forged under the weight of expectation of a nation

Amid the tumult of emotion and incident, Bob Dwyer, Australia's coach, was uncharacteristically lost for words. In an opening World Cup match that had exceeded expectations with its vibrant play, Australia, the defending champions, had lost. And Dwyer admitted he was not sure why. Usually, he is as sharp as Archimedes.

Outside the grandstand, a banner was still being gleefully paraded. "Forget the Rhino. Save the Wallabies." Dwyer and his team were having to come to terms with the fact, tough for any Australian at the best of times, that South African nerve and character had been superior.

Francois Pienaar, the Springbok captain, and his colleagues, under pressure far worse than the visitors because of the expectation from this nation that is almost literally on the boil, had met fate head-on and mastered it. They had allowed the champions an early lead, and then given them a beating. It was stirring stuff.

"I think we were a bit more hungry than them," Pienaar said with understatement.

"Some of their players faltered when we put pressure on them. We've improved since 1992, and we can improve some more."

It may not have been the most significant moment of the week on Wednesday, when President Mandela visited the team, but Pienaar reflected on the motivation produced by the occasion. "He's a great man," the captain said with uninhibited admiration, "and we all thought that if we can persevere like he did, we'll be a great side."

Kitch Christie, South Africa's coach, had almost that smug smile of the proverbial Cheshire cat. He said little he could afford to, because he had got it right, never mind the welter of criticism beforehand. "Our tactical kicking upset them," was the nearest he came to defining a victory which has immediately set the terms of reference for the tournament.

What a day it had been, beginning with the most col-

ourful and unaffected of opening ceremonies, embracing all the races of "our rainbow nation" as Mandela referred to it. The streets outside had also borne testimony to the spirit of freedom and cheerfulness that you encounter everywhere, thousands thronging every pavement and side street. The itinerant vendors had faces representing every city from Cairo to Shanghai.

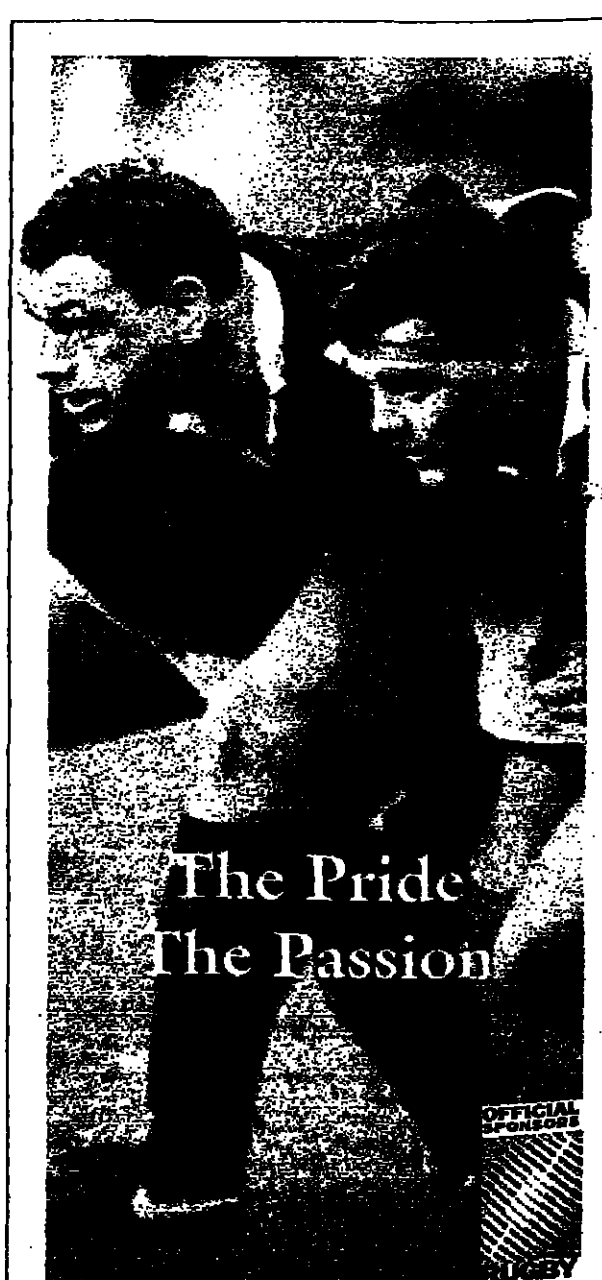
On the field, the Springboks were as committed, without being violent, as it is possible for a side to be. They ran like men possessed. I shall carry the memory of James Dalton, their hooker, pursuing a long kick for touch from close to the South African line, during the late, vain spell of Australian resurgence which had the hosts pinned down. The ball was not going to reach touch, as Campese closed in on it. Dalton, a barrel of a man on little legs, was coming after it at such a rate that he seemed faster than the world's most

celebrated winger. And forced him out of play.

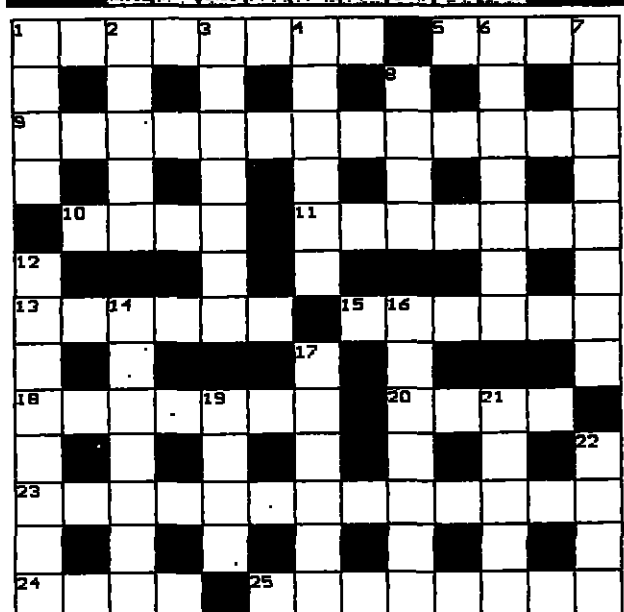
It was an uncomfortable afternoon for Dwyer, and the problems will not quickly go away. Was it temperamental failure more than tactical, he was asked? The temperament, he suggested, affected the technique. There would be changes. They had to analyse themselves. They need to. It is not so much Australian rugby which has been bruised, as Australian character.

At 13-9 South Africa were there for the taking. You sensed that one or two Australians felt the result was going to come to them. The all-white South Africans, who have that psychological immunity to the state of the game which is the hallmark of great competitors, hit back instantly with a near-try by Stransky and then a runaway gallop by Hendriks that utterly changed the colour of the contest.

Before he crossed the line, having run clean through Campese's despairing tackle — how Campese looked his age! — Hendriks had his arm raised in triumph. The gesture encapsulated the moment of South Africa's moral seizure of victory.

The Pride
The PassionTHE
FAMOUS GROUSE
FINEST SCOTCH WHISKY

السنة الأولى

TIMES TWO
CROSSWORD

No 480

ACROSS

- 1 Put down, keep secret (8)
5 Beer foam: specified num ber of cattle (4)
9 Expose (scandal) (4,3,3,3)
10 Bird: sailor (4)
11 Account: translation (7)
13 Noted; noticeable (6)
15 Away (6)
18 Take advantage of (7)
20 Prison (slang) (4)
23 Car-handling instruction (7,6)
24 Fashion; anger (4)
25 Pronouncement on convict (8)

DOWN

- 1 Location (of activity) (4)
2 Rod: gambling game (5)
3 Group of followers (7)
4 Postpone; slope gently (6)
6 Arousing strong feelings (7)
7 Clearly specified (8)
8 Coffin-rest (4)
12 Burn slowly and quietly (8)
14 Bringing up, lifting (7)
16 Willed item (7)
17 Hunting dog (6)
19 Tchaikovsky overture (4)
21 - Welles, Citizen Kane director (5)
22 Leg joint (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 479

- ACROSS: 1 Caper 7 Usher in 8 Stagger 9 Be brief 11 Yum-Yum 13 So to speak 15 Name names 19 Die out 21 Compost 23 Avenger 24 Cluster 25 Trade
DOWN: 1 Cushy 2 Plasma 3 Regius 4 Curb 5 De trop 6 Vinegar 10 Evoked 12 Morass 14 Panoply 16 Expose 17 Silent 18 Loggia 20 Terse 22 Tarn

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Reformers' plans could fall flat

By SIMON WILDE

ENGLISH cricket's "big five" finally came out of the shadows yesterday. Beneath the glare of television lights and some famous old faces that have adorned the Long Room at the Oval since the game was officially run by amateurs, the Test Match Grounds County Clubs working party presented its brave and ultra-professional vision of the future.

This six-man committee, chaired by Tony Cross, of Warwickshire, believes that the only way England will again be an international force is with the creation of a system of clear accountability. Many

of its aims, outlined in a 25-page proposal, are worthy enough, but whether Cross's group has overplayed its hand may not be clear until next week's special meeting at Lord's at which some 50 other submissions will also be considered.

One of the purposes of yesterday's presentation was to alleviate the fears of those who had "jumped to conclusions about a report they had not read".

What emerged was that the leaks were largely accurate. A 38-team, four-division championship, embracing first-class and minor counties (places to be decided by 1996 form): an FA Cup-style NatWest Trophy; county cricket boards adminis-

tering all aspects of the game within their boundaries: all were there. "Competitiveness" and "self-help" were common phrases, as was: "There can be no losers".

The plans need a two-thirds majority among the 20 members of the Test and County Cricket Board to gain acceptance and early indications are that only MCC, the Minor Counties association and "one or two" others would back the "big five". They want four places on their proposed 12-man executive to run the game on a daily basis. Yesterday they had catered for an audience of 80 but only a dozen turned up. It was rather like watching an uncompetitive county match.

European places in jeopardy as Uefa takes hard line

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

ENGLISH clubs have been put into a no-win situation by the greed, the ambition, the disregard for footballers' welfare, of Uefa, the governing body of European football. Over the past few days, the Uefa leadership has attempted to coerce clubs into the Intertoto Cup, a spurious competition which the money-men of Uefa have created to fill those few weeks between the end of one season and the start of another.

On Tuesday and on Wednesday, first Lennart Johansson, the president of Uefa, and then Gerardo Aigner, the general secretary, made specific threats to members of the Football Association that were tantamount to saying that, if English clubs did not agree to compete, then all of England's hard-earned places in the leading European competitions would be withdrawn.

This followed the refusal by Tottenham Hotspur, Queens Park Rangers, Wimbledon and Sheffield Wednesday to accept invitations to the tournament this summer. They did that despite a menacing threat that Uefa would fine any English club that qualified for the tournament, by dint of position in the FA Carling Premiership, the sum of £50,000.

When Sir Bert Millichip, chairman of the Football Association, arrived in Vienna for the final of the European Cup this week, he was informed of the threat to ban English clubs from all competitions. Later, Trevor Phillips, the FA's commercial director, was warned by Aigner of the same consequences. No date was mentioned, but it appears that the threat is not to Blackburn Rovers, Manchester United or the other teams that have qualified this season, but for the start of the 1996-97 season. Uefa, not for the first time, is firing from the hip.

The mess that the clubs of England have got themselves into is, this time, not the fault of the FA, for the club chairmen had initially expressed a desire to take part in the competition. Last night, it appeared that three "volunteers" are about to be coerced. Queens Park Rangers, Southampton, and Tottenham or Wimbledon, are thought to be reconsidering their "option".